

**Rural Women Teachers:
Their Narrative Identities
and
Reflections on Community Life**

**A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts in Sociology
in the
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by
Nicola Jane Robertson**

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to two very special women in my life: my mother, Shirley Robertson, and my friend, Philomena Brennan. Both women reflect the intergenerational stories presented in this thesis, as my mother is "50 something" and Phi is "30 something". They trained as kindergarten and primary school teachers respectively and still use their teaching qualifications today. Each married a farmer, is a mother (among many other identities) and lives in a rural area. Thank you for your inspiration and being part of my journey. This thesis is dedicated to you both and all other rural women who can identify with the stories within these pages.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the narrative identities of two generations of rural women teachers who live in a small Canterbury mixed farming district that also serves tourists. These eight women's stories were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews. The women have all married local farmers after arriving as newcomers to teach, in either the 1960s to early 1970s or the 1990s, at the secondary or primary schools within the area. This thesis explores how the women narrate multiple identities as teachers, wives, mothers, farmers and community members. These identities shift over time, space and in relation to the women's context, whether they are relating with other people locally in the rural community, with their family of origin in the city, or elsewhere. Yet, the majority of these women also negotiate their identities into what appears to be a more essential "me." The women's own concept of community is explored, in addition to the number of communities they each belong to (defined either geographically or symbolically). The way the women identify themselves as "newcomers or outsiders" and "locals or insiders" is also analysed in relation to their sense of belonging. Throughout this thesis an intergenerational comparison of the women's stories is made.

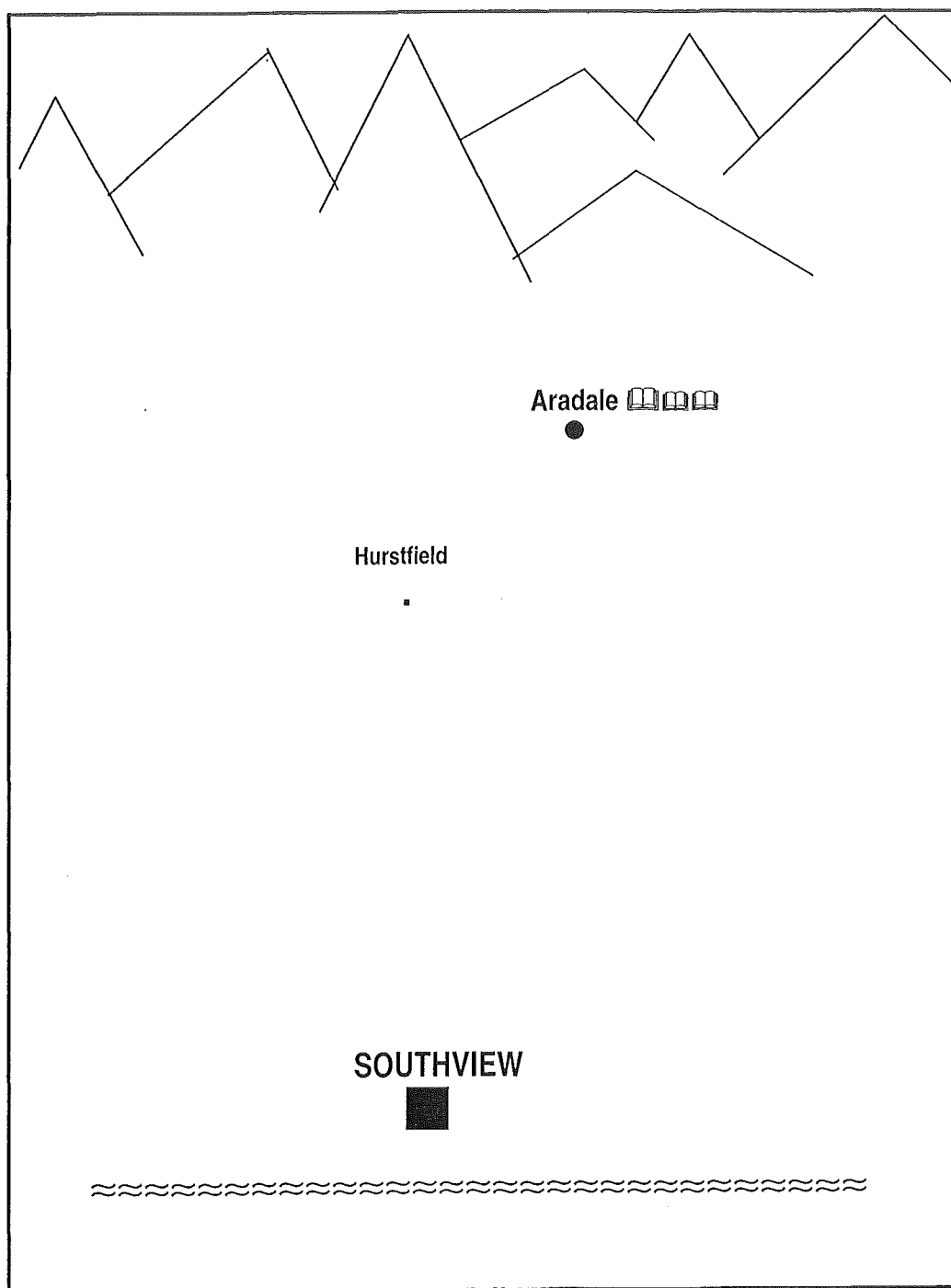


Figure 1: The Fieldwork Map

| | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| KEY: | • Township | Secondary School |
| | ● Population of approximately 1,000 | Primary School |
| | ■ Population of approximately 16,000 | Church |
| | ≈≈≈ Sea | Mountains |

Distances: Aradale to Hurstfield 8-9 km, Aradale to Southview 34 km.

Note: The distances between Aradale and the mountains, and Southview and the sea are not shown to scale. The distance between the three settlements is accurate.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PROCESSES

The simple act of telling a woman's story from a woman's point of view is a revolutionary act. Carol Christ, cited in Munro (1998:17)

1.1 Introduction

This thesis is a celebration of a particular group of rural women who are sometimes seen as "other" or "invisible" in our predominantly urbanised society. In 1996, 85.1 per cent of New Zealand's population lived in urban areas (Statistics New Zealand 1997a:22). In rural areas social relations are still gendered, to differing degrees, in the division of labour, power relations and through land ownership (Gill *et al.* 1976, Maunier 1983, Ponter 1995, Toynbee 1996). While existing stories support pervading myths of rural romanticism and nostalgia (Bell 1993), stories are also told that resist these traditions. Michelle Moir (1997) in *New Zealand Country Women*, a book of 75 photographic and pen portraits, captured some of these stories. This thesis explores the stories of rural women teachers. The approach I take is grounded, first and foremost, in the women's experiences and subjectivities. This sociological study is based in a specific geographical location and focuses on the identities of individual women; it then broadens to capture their reflections on community life.

In this chapter I will introduce my position as a researcher who takes on both insider and outsider status while doing the fieldwork (Section 1.2) before outlining the rationale and research questions that inform this thesis (Section 1.3). I then discuss the theoretical framework, based on Margaret Somers' work on narrative identities, which structures this thesis (Section 1.4). This is followed by a brief overview of the fieldwork areas of Hurstfield and Aradale (Section 1.5) before describing and reflecting upon the actual fieldwork, including gaining access, research methods and ethical issues (Section 1.6). I conclude this chapter by stating how I use Somers' theory to analyse the fieldwork in this thesis by outlining each chapter respectively (Section 1.7).

1.2 The Personal is Political: My Positioning as Insider/Outsider

I am aware this thesis could have been my story. What I present here is "sociologically relevant to my topic and [is the story] that I am prepared to divulge in a public forum" (Middleton 1993:9). As a teenager I remember despairing over what I was going to do with my life, for a career. I have memories of my father consoling me by saying I would make a

good teacher. Yet, I vividly recall resisting that advice. Like Munro (1998:1), "I did not want to be a teacher. Teaching was women's work." I thought there must be other work or an occupation for this "rural lass," yet I had been exposed to so many women who taught in the community in which I grew up. My mother was a kindergarten teacher before marrying my father, a farmer. They were the role models who helped shape my view of the world. This research originates from a personal interest and questioning of my rural upbringing. I grew up with a sense that women played a very important part in what is still a largely gendered farming system, despite the first and second waves of feminism.

Growing up, from the late 1960s to mid 1980s, I always imagined I would marry a farmer. Back then the prevailing attitudes precluded women from becoming farmers; it was not an appropriate career path for even a farmer's daughter to take. Yet, attitudes have changed so much in society that I could now be that farmer; I could also stay unmarried. The findings of two national studies of rural women reflect these changes in terms of land ownership. In 1975, 28 per cent of 609 female respondents had shared in farm ownership, while only three per cent had sole ownership (Gill *et al.* 1976:29). In the 1989 study, 59 per cent of 956 women had some kind of ownership status while only five per cent had sole ownership (Ponter 1996:36-7). While sole ownership has increased only two per cent since the previous study, of significance is the number of rural women who had ownership capacity (with their partner, in a partnership or in a company); such ownership had doubled over the 15 years. These changes reflect the introduction of the 1976 Matrimonial Property Act and the 1983 Income Tax Amendment Act which ensured farm women had equal legal status as property owners with their husbands and could farm in partnerships sharing taxation liabilities (Grigg 1987:Ch 25:5; Ponter 1996:72-3). Women were assuming more diverse roles in society generally. However, in 1989 only 29 per cent of women overtly identified as farmers (Ponter 1996:75).

Amidst this changing milieu, this thesis pursues my interest in gender through rural sociology. I straddle two cultures: the urban where I now live and study, and the rural where I grew up for 18 years and where my family of origin still lives. I was the fourth generation to live on the family farm where my father still farms today. I am a local or insider because I was born, schooled (at both primary and secondary levels) and went to church for my formative years in the rural communities of Hurstfield and Aradale. My socialisation took place in this rural context where I identified as the daughter of middle class farming parents. I witnessed a clearly gendered division of labour between them; my mother was the primary caregiver (private sphere) and my father was the farmer (public sphere).

I grew up with a strong sense of "who I was" in those communities. The foundations of my "identity"¹ began in Aradale and Hurstfield. Yet, I am now also an outsider because I left to pursue tertiary education. I no longer live permanently in those communities or take part in daily life there; I am a visitor when I return. I have spent 13 of the last 14 years living in Christchurch or Dunedin studying and working. Yet throughout this time I have retained strong ties with family and friends, all of whom I term "true locals." I am seen by them still to have local origins, but I cannot take on local status wholeheartedly when I visit Aradale or Hurstfield because I have physically shifted away and reside elsewhere. I identify myself as a Mainlander; I am proud to be a South Islander. My Canterbury origins and birthplace are important to the grounding of my identities, creating the knowledge that I will always have a "home" wherever I live or travel. Some of those identities would be challenged if the family farm were sold to a person outside the extended family: there would no longer be a fixed place that I could return to, and my concept of home would be based on memories rather than a physical location. The physical place I call my "family home" has seen the house change structurally over four generations of family life, in addition to evolving land use patterns on this family farm. But despite these changes, a deep set of emotional meanings relating to permanence and continuity remain (Dupuis and Thorns 1998:30). This "home" is important to me, and who I am, as is the space that surrounds it. I grew up taking the open spaces and landscape I lived in for granted.² Now I value with passion the sight of the Canterbury Plains and their patchwork pattern of paddocks flanked by the Southern Alps.

Of equal importance to me is having my own home and garden in Christchurch. Home is a safe and secure base from which my ontological security is grounded; it is the space in which I construct my identities and gain "a sense of control that is missing in other locales" (Dupuis and Thorns 1998:24). I have lived in the same house for over six years and know my neighbours well. Despite the fact that I live in rental accommodation I feel a sense of belonging in St Albans, particularly since participating at our Community Resource Centre. However, I enjoy the anonymity of living in the city and being known for my own merits. In the city it is not important who my family is and what they do in the same way that it was in the rural community I grew up in. I value being able to move between the rural and urban areas freely. My experience as both an "insider" and an "outsider" back "home," in my rural community of origin, has enabled me to relate to the experiences of the women who shared

¹ I put identity in inverted commas because of its ambiguous nature. I possess multiple identities, which emerge in different contexts. I negotiate these shifting and often-contradictory selves on a regular basis yet acknowledge they exist within the one person known as Nicola.

² On leaving home to attend university in 1986 I was struck by the culture shock of urban life. After eighteen years of living on a farm, nothing had prepared me for the feeling of alienation and sense of being "on my own" in a city full of people. Living with 100 other females in a multi-storey hall of residence meant my new life was in complete contrast to the open spaces and sense of security I had experienced as a "local" in a rural farming district. Having lived on the same farm all my life I had a very strong sense of "identity" that was being challenged in the city.

their stories in this research, although, the transition I have made from rural to urban is in direct contrast to most of the women I interviewed: seven women came from urban to rural backgrounds. This project has particular personal interest as in my lifetime I have been both an "insider"/"local" and an "outsider" in my rural community of origin. This thesis therefore stems from a childhood personal interest, which I am going to explore in a sociological context.

1.3 Rationale and Research Questions

This thesis is an opportunity to develop further the use of narratives as a research tool, which I began as a project, "Urban - Rural Migration: The Stories of Women Teachers Who Relocate to Rural Communities" (1997), for my Sociology of Gender Honours paper. My original migration focus has now changed to identities. I wanted to explore how women teachers viewed their identities as newcomers in the rural district through to the present day and whether these identities changed over time. I was also interested in what the women's concept of "community" entailed. This interest was motivated by my observations growing up as a "local" in a Canterbury farming community. I term the location a community because I had a sense of belonging there through my nuclear and extended family. I knew my neighbours well and socialised with friends both formally and informally through school, church, the Girl Guide movement and sport. That in turn prompted my intellectual interest more specifically in women teachers who choose to settle in the rural community. As Carolyn Steedman (1986:28) says:

In childhood, only the surroundings show, and nothing is explained. Children do not possess a social analysis of what is happening to them, or around them, so the landscape and the pictures it presents have to remain a background, taking on meaning later, from different circumstances. That dream is the past that lies at the heart of my present: it is my interpretive device, the means by which I can tell a story.

Like Steedman, I am now drawing on my personal background, having been trained as an adult to use my sociological imagination (Mills 1970). I wanted to explore the stories of a group of women who play crucial roles in the functioning of one small community in the South Island, New Zealand. It cannot be named for purposes of confidentiality, but it is known as Aradale in this thesis. Within that community an even smaller community exists, which has the pseudonym Hurstfield (both are introduced in Section 1.5). The women who shared their stories all live on farms near the town of Aradale or the township of Hurstfield. They have all taught at either the primary or secondary school in Aradale, or the primary school at Hurstfield, which closed at the end of 1998.

The choice to interview women who have trained as teachers does not deny the importance of the diverse range of women from many occupational groups in the locality (Ponter, 1996:18). For the purposes of this research I wanted an easily identifiable group to interview, appropriate for the constraints of a Masters thesis. Teachers are a distinct group, which brings its own cultural capital.³ This is a topic I feel very passionate about, and so I excluded other occupational groupings (service industry, nursing and other professions). In addition, women dominate teaching, particularly as part-time relievers (Livingston 1990:5), so this seemed an interesting topic to pursue. Who were these women? Where did they come from and why did they stay? As a primary school student I remember being amazed by the number of my friends' mothers who did relief teaching. Were the stories different two or three decades ago compared to now? Teachers were among a few traditional categories of professionals to migrate to rural communities.⁴ Teaching and nursing were the two professions to which New Zealand women had access in the first half of the twentieth century (Else 1986:iv, Middleton and May 1997:61). Now, with current school amalgamations taking place under a Ministry of Education Education Development Initiative (EDI), primary schools are closing in the South Island.⁵ As the EDIs move north through New Zealand, primary school closures like at Hurstfield will reduce the historical flow of teachers to rural communities. This is an important topic to pursue now because these stories capture the lives of women teachers who have stayed to become rural women of the present, while reflecting on their past. They are teachers, farmers, wives, mothers, community members and leaders. If all small rural schools are closed, or amalgamated with neighbouring schools, teachers will be working in larger, more centralised urban schools. I envisage this change could also threaten the "community spirit" in small rural areas. I imagine the stories told by today's women will be different from those of previous and future generations.

³ French sociologist Bourdieu believes class position can be transferred through capital and "cultural capital," which is acquired in a home which encourages reading, the arts, and values the education system. Children with cultural capital do well in schooling, obtaining qualifications to obtain better work in society (Coxon *et al.* 1994:273).

⁴ In addition to teachers, professional people like doctors and ministers have traditionally migrated to rural Scottish communities. Until recently other individuals to arrive were return migrants, people who had previously left and were now returning to their place of origin (Forsythe 1980:287). In New Zealand, Maori have returned to their rural communities, in addition to farming people who went away to boarding school and university or developed a trade or profession (Scott *et al.* 1997:40).

⁵ In 1991, the Government introduced EDIs as a way of school communities considering "reshaping" the structure of local schooling (Ministry of Education 1994:9). In 1998, 12 EDIs were completed in New Zealand; ten were in rural areas and 11 were in the South Island (Ministry of Education 1999:14). In all but one case, two primary schools came together to form one giving the board and parents the opportunity to be involved in the reorganisation of their schools. This 1990s initiative recognises school and population changes; aims to redistribute resources and facilities to reflect community preferences; and aims to strengthen the school curriculum (Ministry of Education 1994:10). Historically school consolidations occurred earlier this century; for example, in 1925 four small schools at Littledene were consolidated into one (Somerset 1938:74).

The questions central to this research are threefold:

- ❖ How do two generations of rural women, trained as teachers, identify themselves within this rural community?
- ❖ How do they express their identities, that is, in terms of essential, multiple, shifting, complex, contradictory and/or fixed selves?
- ❖ What are the similarities and differences that exist between the stories told by the two generations of women?

My thesis is that identities are multiple and shifting. Identities are expressed through the narratives and stories we each tell. Each telling of a specific story brings into existence the narrator's identities in that context, whether in rural or urban New Zealand. The group of rural women interviewed demonstrates this argument well. In order to assist my exploration of these identities in the rural context I have chosen Margaret Somers' theoretical framework based around narrative identities.

1.4 The Theoretical Framework

The multiplicity of experience that exists in a woman's life can be captured through narratives rather than researching women's lives in a scientifically neutral way. Bronwyn Davies (1992:54) highlights that although male social scientists have aimed for a "positionless truth," the reality is that people never speak from a neutral perspective. What has been labelled as "scientifically neutral" has historically equated to a white male perspective ignoring the voice of women and other minority groups or silenced people. This research endeavours to fill part of that gap by voicing the stories, or rather counter narratives, of a group of women who have trained as teachers and live in a particular rural community. As Carol Christ said, "telling a woman's story from a woman's point of view is a revolutionary act" (Munro 1998:17). The stories that follow are important because they belong to women who are going about their everyday lives: "In everyday life, narrative articulates how actors go about their rounds and accomplish their tasks" (Richardson 1990b:22). Susan Williams (1999) calls these everyday tasks "unhistoric acts:" the unsung contributions that people make in their daily lives. These are "the stuff of history itself" (Williams 1999:77). Speaking and listening are political acts for women who tell their stories. It is political because they are not being silenced. Out of people's everyday stories change occurs and our history is made.

Narrative, as storytelling, has been used in the history discipline. Kevin Gotham and William Staples (1996:482) acknowledge that a growing body of work in historical sociology has used "narrative to redefine meanings of causality and the role of theory." They state that

sociology is in a time of theoretical and methodological transformation, so now is a good time for sociologists to engage with narratives (Gotham and Staples 1996:494). David Maines (1993) cited Thomas and Znaniecki's *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1918-20) as being the first major use of narrative data. Four decades later, in 1959, C. Wright Mills (1970) advocated linking biography, history and social structure. Narrativity is one way of studying such issues sociologically. Temporality was core to Laurel Richardson's (1990a, 1990b, 1997) narrative writings over the last decade.

Parallel to the rising use of narratives has been the arrival of a new "politics of identity," with identity expression as the primary goal towards "self-realization" (Somers 1994:608). As a result "identity-formation is slowly gaining ground in sociology" (Somers 1994:638) with people outside the discipline instigating changes. They include previously marginalised groups: women, ethnic minorities, people of colour and people who were nationally excluded; and the "new social movements" based on identity expression, for example, the Gay Liberation Front (Plummer 1995:52). Refer to Seidman (1994:234-80) for a fuller discussion of new social movements relating to gender, race, sexuality, and identity. The late 1960s and 1970s were a key time in the growth of identity politics (Calhoun 1994; and particularly Somers and Gibson 1994; and Zaretsky 1994). The work of George Herbert Mead during the 1930s on temporality and self-identity, and Erving Goffman's self-concept and the role of power in constructing narrative identities during the late 1950s and 1960s (Ezzy 1998; Jenkins 1996), were antecedents to the current theorising on narrative identity.

I have chosen to focus on identities rather than "identity" (as footnote 1 explains) because of the complex and changing ways that we describe ourselves. We do not fit neatly into a singular, essential self that remains static over time. Instead we tell multiple stories in the context of differing social relations. I use the term identities to mean "who we are" and "who we identify as", this includes how we position ourselves in relation to other people through stories and the way we are positioned in the stories that other people tell about us. Identities are embedded in social relations, as we fully or partially accept or resist other people's expectations. Stuart Hall's definition of identities is more succinct than my own: "Identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past, [present and future]" (cited in Wittman 1998:60). I wanted to find a way to explore the different identities that the women interviewed gave themselves over time and in different spaces. In order to do this I have used the work of Margaret Somers (1986, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1998, Somers and Gibson 1994) as my theoretical framework. Somers (1993:595) states:

...*identities are not derived* from attributes imputed from a stage of societal development (e.g. pre-industrial or modern) or a social category (e.g. traditional artisan, factory laborer, or working class wife), but *by actors'*

places in the multiple relationships in which they are embedded... "identities" embed the actors within relationships and stories that shift over time and space [emphasis added].

Of particular importance has been her journal article, which outlined the narrative constitution of identity using a relational and network approach (Somers 1994). The concept of narrative identity was central to that article and to this thesis.

Somers (1994:613-4) proposed "linking the concepts of *narrative* and *identity* to generate a historically constituted approach to theories of social action, agency, and identity." Narrative identity is coherent and historically grounded, yet is also fluid and changeable (Ezzy 1998:246) to capture the complexities of social life. A narrative, or story (I use the two terms interchangeably), is told to interpret our everyday life experiences. The stories available to us at any one particular time are dependent on the era in which we are living and the time has to be right for telling them. Ken Plummer (1995) uses the example of sexual stories cluttering up our modern and "late modern" society because they have been acceptable to tell. Similarly, focusing on narrative identities in the rural context is a way of looking at the complex roles that women undertake. An example of narratives about "living together" in de facto relationships has changed between the 1970s and the 1990s; they are now acceptable to tell. Somers (1994:606) acknowledges people as multiple, ephemeral and/or changing, but within those identities time, space and relationality must be incorporated. Relational setting is the second key concept that Somers uses to combine these relationships. She replaces the term "society" with "relational setting" in order to capture the narrativity of social life. "A relational setting is a pattern of relationships among institutions, public narratives, and social practices. As such it is a relational matrix, a social network" (Somers 1994:626). A relational setting is characterised through its history and therefore must be explored over time and space.

Narrative identity and relational setting, as discussed above, are two key components of what Somers calls conceptual narrativity. She was interested in how identity was constructed through narratives and introduced four dimensions of narrativity: ontological narratives, public narratives, metanarrativity and conceptual narrativity. Conceptual narrativity is the most important of these. Conceptual narrativity includes the concepts that we as social researchers use to explain ontological and public narratives (Somers 1993:620). Ontological narratives are the individual stories through which social actors make sense of their lives. Public narratives, for example, teachers' common stories of their profession, are larger than a single story or individual and are attached to cultural or institutional formations (Somers 1993:618-9). Metanarrativity, for example capitalism, refers to the master narratives in which "we are embedded as contemporary actors in history and as social scientists" (Somers 1992:605). Metanarrativity is less important in this thesis than

Somers' other dimensions of narrativity because I have chosen a more micro sociological analysis by focusing on identities of rural women within their communities. Therefore, I do not intend addressing the metanarrative of capitalism that shapes the women's lives. Instead I will focus on the ontological narratives that the women tell and the wider public narratives. In Chapters Two and Three the ontological narratives are presented as life histories for each woman interviewed, while in Chapters Four and Five I use public narratives and conceptual narrativity to analyse the women's stories.

Somers (1992:606) states that "conceptual narrativity demands *temporality*, *spatiality*, and *emplotment* as well as *relationality*, *structure*, and *historicity*. *Narrative identity* and *relational setting* represent concepts that have worked best in my own research." People make sense of their experiences by organising them into stories, or narrative sequences, through which they comprehend the world. Narrativity demands that we recognise the meaning of single events in temporal and spatial relationship to other events. The connectivity of parts is precisely why narrativity turns "events" into "episodes," regardless of how we choose to order them. Without the "causal emplotment" which accounts for a narrative's shape, there would be no linking of events, only categorisation (Somers, 1994:616). Somers stresses the importance of creating new concepts to describe our identities. At times when there is a silence or gap in literature or recorded life experiences, a "counter narrative" is a way of getting a new story told. This thesis is a counter narrative because the stories of the women interviewed fill a silence, a gap in the existing literature. The counter narrative is a combination of different ontological and public narratives.

Ontological narratives, also known as personal narratives by Plummer (1995) or auto/biography by Liz Stanley (1992), are the stories that people tell about themselves in order to make sense of their own lives: "The narrative-identity approach emphasizes how we characterize or locate people within a processual and sequential movement of relationships and life-episodes" (Somers 1994:624). Ontological narratives change as people live their lives; the stories they tell affect their actions and vice versa. Identities are not static. Somers (1994:630) cites Violi who:

...notes the difficulties for women in constructing social identities.... Seeing representation, narrative, and subjectivity as part of the same process, Violi argues that unless female subjectivity is made visible through narrative "it will remain confined within the closed space of individual experience." Choosing narratives to express multiple subjectivities is a deliberate way of rejecting the neutrality and appearance of objectivity typically embedded in master narratives.

I share a similar vision to Somers'; I advocate the need for the experiences, subjectivities and stories of this group of women in Aradale and Hurstfield to be explored as a means of understanding a component of social life. Davies states, "Who we are, our subjectivity, is

spoken into existence in every utterance...in each moment of speaking and being, we each reinvent ourselves...socially, psychically, and physically" (Davies 1992:73-4). The importance of people identifying who they are in a particular place or space in time, whether now or historically, is crucial for sociologists to deal with; this thesis is my contribution.

1.5 Aradale and Hurstfield

My fieldwork was conducted on the Canterbury Plains in the Southview district, which, like Aradale and Hurstfield, is a pseudonym. Southview, with a population of 15,800, is a major provincial town that serves a rural district of 7,440 people (Statistics New Zealand 1997a). The Southern Alps bound the Southview district to the west, the ocean bounds it to the east, while the northern and southern boundaries are rivers. (Refer to Figure 1: The Fieldwork Map for a symbolic representation of this area). While the Southview district has clear geographical boundaries, the same cannot be said for the communities beyond the town of Aradale or the township of Hurstfield. Like other flat landscapes these rural hinterlands have no clear boundaries, and the residents have their own definitions of community.

The physical landscape is flat with a patchwork pattern of paddocks divided by trees to shelter stock. The climate is changeable with frequent periods of warm northwesterly winds and periods of cold southerlies that bring rain. The winter season is cold and frosty with clear blue skies, while intermittent periods of drought characterise the summer. The Southview district has a mixture of farming types based on livestock and/or cropping. Of the stock, 68 per cent of Southview farms have sheep (Statistics New Zealand 1998), while beef cattle, cows and heifers, deer, and to a lesser extent pigs are also farmed. In more recent years dairy farming has increased in popularity, with stock numbers almost equalling beef cattle, and this has changed some social dynamics.⁶ The area around Hurstfield and Aradale is known for its fertile soils for growing grain and arable crops like wheat, oats, barley, peas, lentils and grass seed. Over the years change has occurred with farm sizes evolving from the large estates of the late nineteenth century to the 1920s, to the predominance of smaller family farms for most of the twentieth century, with trends now towards farm amalgamation (Fairweather 1987).

An outsider from a neighbouring district described, in a personal conversation to me, the elite element in existence among some farmers. She commented on, "The Southview 'elite'

⁶ From a cultural perspective, sheep farmers saw themselves as elite, autonomous, in touch with and careful managers of nature. By contrast, dairy farmers were historically proletarian, and as dairy farming was regarded as factory work where cows were plugged in to milking machines; it was routine and controllable, engaging increasingly with improved technologies (Morris *et al.* 1995). In more recent years, however, dairy farming has been more profitable than sheep farming, and is characterised by the scattering of new houses and milking sheds across the landscape.

with their stand-up collars, boarding school children, social etiquette re dress code and bringing a platter of food rather than a couple of smaller plates..." (Research Diary, 18 April 1998). Mahar (1985) uses the term "elite rural women" to describe women who by their economic position and social capital can also choose whether to send their children to boarding school. Other farming people who do not have children at boarding school while owning land would not be classed as elite. By contrast, there are the blue-collar workers, both rural and town-based, in the service industries, and the petit bourgeois business owners elsewhere in the Southview district, who would send their children to school locally.

Aradale is the closest town for all women interviewed. Aradale provides all basic amenities to a resident population of 1,070 people (Statistics New Zealand 1997a) which grows seasonally. There are two primary schools and one secondary school in Aradale; the Memorial Hall; two Protestant churches and one Catholic church and their attached halls/facilities; a number of other denominations who meet in different Aradale locations; and a Playcentre, a crèche and public library. Aradale is a rural service town serving farmers with two stock and station agents (there were five at the height of farming prosperity in the 1960s), seed businesses, potato growers, agricultural contractors and cartage firms. Other businesses in the town include two supermarkets, a postal agency, medical centre, physiotherapist, gymnasium, pharmacy, butchery, service station, several motor mechanics, veterinarians, at least two hairdressers, a craft cooperative set up by local artists, two hotels and take-away bars. The Post Office and its associated savings bank closed in the 1980s after celebrating its centenary in the late 1970s. One bank closed early in 1999, leaving Aradale's only ATM machine for a sixth month trial period. One trading bank remains in Aradale.

In Aradale there were 56 clubs and committees listed in the publication to commemorate the district centennial (Aradale and Districts Centennial Committee 1979). These covered a multitude of sporting clubs, and farming related clubs like Country Women's Institute, Women's Division Federated Farmers, Young Farmers' Club (YFC), Country Girls' Club (CGC) now combined with YFC, Federated Farmers, and the Agricultural and Pastoral (A & P) Association. Other clubs and associations included the Plunket Society, Plunket Mothers, Friendship Club, cultural and creative clubs, Brownies, Girl Guides, Cubs and Boy Scouts, two lodges, and service clubs like the RSA, Jaycees (chapter closed), and Lions. The Volunteer Fire Brigade, Search and Rescue Association, tramping club, the previous Businessmen's Association and more recently the Promotions Association cover another diverse area of interests. There are many clubs in existence for people who are willing to get involved. The town is sprinkled with indoor and outdoor sporting facilities (fields, courts, greens, a pool) and clubrooms. There is a racecourse in Aradale, a golf course, A & P show

grounds, camping grounds, a walkway around the town and walks taking in the nearby scenery and foothills.

Tourism has become a major seasonal focus for business people in Aradale since the development of a sporting attraction in the 1970s. What was historically a town founded on agrarian values has evolved over three decades to see people of more diverse backgrounds make Aradale their home. The talents and energy that these people have brought to Aradale has injected a new vibrancy to the town. However, some locals have resisted the "invasion" of newcomers.⁷ Employment opportunities for casual and part-time staff in the service sector have arisen to meet tourist demands. In this previously stagnant rural economy there are now a multitude of accommodation places ranging from the budget backpacker hostels, bed and breakfast facilities, and motels, to luxury complexes at the upper end of the market. Tourist shops and services now exist in Aradale, as do a café, tearooms, many restaurants, an Information Center, and transport providers. The town has grown due to its function as a local service centre to the tourism sector (Pomeroy 1997). While the farming industry was historically the backbone of the economy, Aradale now has a dual economy. There is an increasing drive to develop and promote Aradale's surrounding attractions as a tourist destination for all seasons. Seasonal workers rent cottages that the farm workers and their families once lived in. These previously vacant cottages are a result of farming becoming less labour intensive and increasingly mechanised. Farmers use more family labour since the economic downturn in the 1980s, hiring casual or contract staff when required.

While Aradale is the closest town for those interviewed, most of the women in this study live in the area around Hurstfield township. Without a reason to stop, the passing motorist could almost miss seeing Hurstfield. Several of the houses are still lived in while others lie empty, as does the old general store. The community hall is used irregularly, and a large ex-railway building is now the base for an agricultural business. The newest building, erected for another agricultural business in the last decade, indicates that some parts of the farming sector are still thriving. While the primary school just out of Hurstfield closed midway through this research, a committee was established to decide the future of the community assets, like the library and land, while another group of "locals" runs the swimming pool for paying users. School children now bus to Aradale or attend a nearby rural school.

⁷ I was one of those locals who chose the topic "Xenophobia in Aradale" for my sixth form speech competitions in 1984. I remember the "arrogance" of tourists wandering over streets while I gave way in the car. I was irritated that the tourists expected the right of way when they were short-term visitors while I had lived there all my life. Since leaving Aradale my views have changed! This example shows how my identities have shifted over time. I now tell multiple stories of tourists, rather than focus on my teenage experiences; as an adult I celebrate their value to the Aradale economy.

Hurstfield township, as the centre of a community, has historically had a rich past that is not obvious from its 1990s appearance. Yet, that history was recorded around male stories of land ownership and businesses, and women were mostly referred to as daughters, sisters, mothers, wives or lovers. The construction of a railway line through Hurstfield in the late 1870s led to the growth and prosperity of the surrounding district. The train brought in supplies for five businesses and farmers, and transported out grain, stock, and wool. The passenger service peaked between the 1890s and the 1920s but was superseded by road transport in the late 1950s. The long history of business in Hurstfield started with the grain store in the late nineteenth century, and early in the twentieth century the township operated two stores, one of which housed the Post Office. The Post Office closed mid 1940s with the introduction of the Rural Delivery Mail Service, and the remaining store closed in the 1960s. The Hurstfield Hall was built in the first decade of the twentieth century:

The history of [Hurstfield] cannot be written without the importance of this Hall being emphasised. It is here that many, as children, first tasted the joys of social activities, be it fancy dress, school or district concert, christening, Sunday School or Guides and Brownies. Later were to come the dances, dinners, Christmas and New Year functions, 21st parties, housewarmings, public welcomes and farewells, sports evenings and of course regular meetings (Centennial Book Committee 1986:98).

However, at almost a century old the Hurstfield Hall is no longer used for many occasions. Rural residents of the late 1990s are more mobile, choosing to socialise and meet out of Hurstfield. Modern cars, combined with the sealing of gravel roads means Christchurch is within 1.5 hours' drive, while Southview is only 20 minutes away. Improved communication networks have further broken down rural/urban barriers. While some people may still feel isolated in this environment, access to telephones, radio, television sets, facsimiles, computers (particularly those with the internet)⁸ has connected most rural people into the national and global economy.

The local education system has also seen many changes. In the late 1880s Hurstfield Primary School (HPS) opened as a small whare, which grew to three permanent classrooms before its closure in the late 1990s. Originally with one teacher and 12 children enrolled, the school roll has fluctuated over the years. It peaked in the late 1950s with 124 students requiring a temporary fourth classroom. The number of teaching staff fluctuated also. HPS was sole charge for the first 25 years (except in 1901 when there was a teaching assistant) and between 1911-1951 it had two teachers. As the roll increased in the 1950s to the late 1960s there were always two to four teachers depending on student numbers. During its

⁸ Of the 43 per cent of farmers who have computers, 28 per cent are connected to the internet according to a national computer survey by Lincoln University's Management Systems Research Unit. On 30 per cent of the farms with computers the spouse was the main user ("More Farmers" 1999).

peak roll the school was first granted a first year teacher, or Probationary Assistant, and this continued for eight years (Centennial Book Committee 1986:117-37). From the 1970s through to its closure HPS consistently had either two or three teachers. Over the school's 112-year history there was always a teaching principal.

Early church services were held on alternate weekends at Hurstfield Hall for two Protestant denominations. Fundraising began to build a combined church in Hurstfield, but by mid 1960s the project was abandoned due to declining numbers; donations were transferred to the respective churches in Aradale where the people attended (Centennial Book Committee 1986:90-1). In the early 1930s Hurstfield Country Women's Institute was formed with a meeting at the local hall and the group still meets today (Aradale and Districts Centennial Committee 1979). A sporting club is also based at the Hurstfield Hall. Hurstfield is a small geographic location with no shops, a handful of residents in the actual township and only a few clubs for them and their farming neighbours to join. However, people are involved in a variety of commitments locally in Aradale, within the Southview district, at a provincial level, and/or nationally, which takes them off the farm.

1.6 The Fieldwork

This research focused on the use of narratives following life history techniques (Middleton 1993). I did not want to explore each woman's whole life story; the emphasis was instead on life since their arrival in the rural community, with a more brief background of their formative years. I was interested in the women's self-identifications rather than labelling them (Rountree 1996:9). I undertook this research from a feminist perspective; acknowledging there are multiple feminist perspectives and methodologies (Reinharz 1992; Armstrong and Du Plessis 1998). My aim was to respect and listen to the women's stories; be open about the research process by being collaborative (Oakley 1981) and reflexive (Reinharz 1997); and to base the fieldwork around reciprocity (MacGibbon *et al.* 1999).

1.6.1 Gaining Access

I gained approval from the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee to do this research (refer Appendix One). I began by conducting a pilot interview with one woman in the area where I grew up; her narratives have been included in this thesis. From here I telephoned seven other women.⁹ Theoretical sampling (Bulbeck 1997) was used to choose these women. I sought women schoolteachers, who currently or previously taught in

⁹ Throughout this project I have used the word "women" or "woman" when discussing those interviewed because I personally do not like the term informant, participant, subject or interviewee.

Hurstfield or Aradale, lived on a farm, and were married to farmers. I used my knowledge of people in the fieldwork area to approach "eligible" women. All eight women are Pakeha. Four of the women are of my generation, aged in their 30s, while the other four are in the 40 to 50s age range.¹⁰ They were each invited to participate in an interview and I then posted a letter detailing the project. All were willing to continue so I arranged a time to meet with each woman in her home, preferably in her own environment so she would feel comfortable, or a mutually agreed place.¹¹ At the access interview, which lasted anywhere from one to three and a half hours, I showed each woman the Information Sheet and Interview Guide (refer Appendices Two and Four). After discussing the research more fully and when they understood what was involved I invited them each to sign the Consent Form (refer Appendix Three). When starting this research in 1997 I found the access interviews worthwhile because it gave us both an opportunity to talk more informally and build rapport before the interview began.

I acknowledge that this group of teachers is not representative of all rural women, and they were never intended to be. I was interested in the narratives and stories the women had to tell. They are only one group of rural women to interview, whom I would term as middle class by their "economic resources (economic capital) and [their] symbolic and cultural capital, (i.e. prestige, reputation, family history, marriage partner, education, and valuable social goods)" (Mahar 1985:20). They did not discuss where they positioned themselves in terms of class, with the exception of one woman, so this is my classification of their class positioning. The women all come from similar backgrounds and led similar lifestyles in this community because they are teachers who married local farmers. These similarities do not mask the diversity of life experiences the women encompass, the varying age range (from early 30s to late 50s), or their respective interests. This diversity was expressed in the individual interviews.

¹⁰ To position myself in relation to the interviewed women, I had previously met four of them. There were many shared experiences: the majority were affiliated to the same church I was brought up attending, five taught at my old primary school, while two women taught at the secondary school I attended. One woman was the daughter-in-law of my Girl Guide Leader, while I was a close friend of her sister-in-law throughout secondary school. Most women knew my parents. Two women regularly went to coffee mornings my mother was involved in running for young mothers. Another connection was through my mother's employment at the local crèche where two women sent their children. Through marriage, one woman is distantly related to me. I had previously met six of the women's husbands: one was two years my senior at school, another man worked on the family farm when I was a teenager, while the third was my brother's school friend. I met the three men of my parent's generation in my younger years while living in Aradale and Hurstfield.

¹¹ One woman came to my mother's house where I was staying during the fieldwork, for both interviews, between her teaching commitments.

1.6.2 Research Methods

I used in-depth, semi-structured interviews in order to access the stories of eight women teachers, past and present. This research is not intended to be representative of all rural women teachers because of the small number involved, despite the in-depth nature of the interviews (Longhurst and Johnston 1998:157). Instead, it reflects the stories and narratives of those interviewed. However, these rural experiences are not just a New Zealand phenomenon as Lucy confirmed at a Narratives Group meeting:¹²

*...you are describing a situation here about which I know nothing because I don't know about rural New Zealand but my sister who lives in rural Essex, in the UK, is in a very similar situation. Like the family she has married into have moved about 15 miles in the last 500 years and there are some people that would call them newcomers! And my nephews, oh **they are newcomers**, but I think half of you comes from my side of the family. It is all about identity (Lucy, 4 March 1999).*¹³

Each interview took between one and three hours excluding the chatting before and afterwards, which was an important part of the interaction. With each woman's permission I tape-recorded the interview which was based on an Interview Guide and Schedule (refer Appendices Four and Five).¹⁴ Each woman was shown the Interview Guide at the access interview, and two women kept a copy to prepare for the actual interview. The questions were used as a guide only, and while all areas were covered in each interview, they were not always in the same order. The Interview Schedule was used as a prompt in the earlier interviews when I was gaining confidence as an interviewer. However, some women talked more freely than others about their experiences and did not need prompting with these more extensive questions.

At the end of each of the full interviews I asked the women if they knew of any other teachers in the immediate area that I might not know about. One woman named 56 teachers, spanning several generations, who either lived in the Aradale area or had retired to Southview. This was to gauge how many other women they knew locally in their situation, and to put their stories in a wider context. I also intended to use this information as a snowball sampling technique, but it was not necessary, as all the women I approached were willing to be interviewed. Three women interviewed from the Honours project of 1997

¹² I belonged to the Narratives Group with four Ph.D. students. We met regularly off campus to discuss relevant theoretical issues, support each other with our academic work and proof read drafts. Despite working in different disciplines, the three original members (Lesley, Lucy and myself) were all using narrative theory to write and analyse our respective theses. This excerpt was taken from a tape recording while discussing my research at an early meeting. These meetings complemented meetings with my supervisors, and were an important part of my research process.

¹³ The words that were spoken with emphasis appear in bold throughout this thesis.

¹⁴ The Interview Guide was a one-page summary of the 11 key areas to ask the women about if they were not covered through the stories told, whereas the Interview Schedule was an extension of the guide which listed further questions for each area. One section was highlighted so that if time was limited I ensured these issues were covered.

were re-interviewed in 1998 with excerpts from both years included in this thesis. The fieldwork started in mid July 1998 with the pilot interview, and once the Interview Guide and Schedule were refined the rest of the interviews were conducted in August 1998. The time between interviews was intended for reflection, transcribing and reading; however, this did not eventuate as planned. Splitting each week between Christchurch and Aradale during the fieldwork became physically and mentally exhausting as I drove between both locations and to different interviews while in the field. Throughout the entire research process I kept a research diary of my progress, thoughts, dilemmas and questions or issues pre/post supervision meetings. In addition, I also noted my experience of doing the fieldwork in a fieldwork diary (Leibrich 1993:276). After each interview I would note my impressions and the things discussed while the tape recorder was off. I would also write down themes that emerged in this diary when I listened to the interview tapes, usually later on the day of the interview. I actively listened to the tapes as many times as practical to become more familiar with the material and as a beginning to my coding (Jones 1985:58; Leibrich 1993:283).

I transcribed the interview tapes verbatim before colour coding each for themes. I posted, between December 1998 and March 1999, the full transcriptions and subsequent written life history back to each woman. After they had read their transcripts and life histories for accuracy, I returned for a follow-up interview to record each woman's comments and reflections. I took down new information they offered and corrected any mistakes while asking some additional questions (refer to Interview Guide 2 in Appendix Six). This was tape-recorded for the four women I visited in January 1999. In April 1999 when I returned to visit the final three women¹⁵ I did not tape-record anything but instead noted all changes or new information on the life history. I saw this as a reciprocal process (James 1986) whereby we were exchanging information, rather than it being a "one way" process where I, as the researcher, took each woman's stories without giving something back in return. I changed information in the life histories on some women's requests, like restructuring sentences to make them more readable and less like the spoken word. The opportunity for women to reflect on their life histories involved making some significant changes. Original stories were altered, giving the women the final say over the way their lives were represented. This could be seen as problematic because stories (or data) changed, but I agree with Bulbeck (1997:7) who states:

While this seems to imply a loss of "authentic" data, I suspect that if I had not offered the chance to edit transcripts I would not even have glimpsed this personal self who, on reflection, women displaced for a more public self.

The stories that informed the life histories were not static throughout the research process.

¹⁵ The last contact was made via the telephone as the woman was on holiday at the time of my visit.

The dynamic and changing nature of these women's identities is discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

1.6.3 Ethical Issues and Concerns

I aimed to conduct the interviews following feminist principles of being open and placing myself overtly in the research. As previously mentioned, it was important to acknowledge that I knew or had some knowledge of most women I interviewed. Janet Finch (1993:176) states that it is important that feminist researchers do not misuse information that a woman shares with them against women in the individual and collective sense. During the fieldwork I realised "I can't assure anonymity. I can only make promises of confidentiality. I'll have to check with the five women already talked to, to see if that's okay" (Research Diary, 7 August 1998). I could not protect women from other local residents (Somerset 1974:103) but I endeavoured to disguise their identities to people outside the district.¹⁶ Sensitive issues can be shared in an interview, and it was important that the women trusted me and information was not taken out of context. For example, in the second week of fieldwork it became apparent that some women I was interviewing had been talking to each other. At this fourth interview the woman talked about a conversation she had with someone I had interviewed the week prior and the struggles this third person had settling into the community. Penny Fenwick (cited in Middleton 1993:79) observed, "The research *process* can provide a forum for strengthening women's networks." This appeared to be happening. Later in the fieldwork I recorded another woman's comments:

She [the woman interviewed] has already spoken to a couple of other women involved and they have enjoyed it [being involved in the research]. One woman said, "Has Nicola Robertson got in touch with you?" She knew there would only be one reason for me to contact them. Great to get that kind of feedback... (Fieldwork Diary, 10 June 1999).

As my entry suggests, I was pleased to get positive feedback about the research and to know that some women were openly discussing the interviews with one another, rather than their involvement being solely private. Some women had earlier described seeing their spoken words in writing as problematic and alienating. Participation had become a "public issue" for these women rather than a "private trouble" (Mills 1970). Before this thesis was submitted I returned to visit family over Christmas and met three women at church who

¹⁶ One woman's ethical concerns were resolved through face to face, email, and telephone communication. The process also involved meeting my supervisors to be clear about honouring the confidentiality agreement. She was concerned that other women interviewed could read things she had said in her transcript. I assured her that the only two people who saw her transcript or listened to her tape-recorded interview were the woman involved and myself, unless she showed anyone else. Even my supervisors were not privy to this information. Before this thesis was submitted she viewed the first and second drafts of her life history, in addition to the excerpts and my analysis used in Chapters Four and Five. Both times she had the opportunity to comment and make any changes.

asked about my research progress. They were open about their involvement, but I was not prepared to approach them because I was with two members of my immediate family. Sue Middleton (1993:74) describes the importance of keeping such information secret, to honour the confidentiality of those interviewed; when at a gathering one woman openly spoke of her involvement in the study, while three others remained silent.

Doing research in a more collaborative manner took longer than I had anticipated. Consultation with each woman did not always end at the follow-up interview. At the time of getting feedback on how I had written up their life stories the women of the younger generation noted only minor factual changes. In contrast, three of the "40 to 50 something" women found it difficult reading about themselves and wanted major changes which involved rewriting parts of their life histories. Three of these women found it difficult to read their transcripts. I explained that the spoken word was more disorganised and fragmented than how we write and that reassured them. I removed their "slang words" as requested (Middleton and May 1997:14). I told all the women interviewed that the life history was likely to change again and I would post the final copy to them before I submitted the thesis. They were all happy about that. One woman was interested in meeting the others who had been interviewed at the end of this research and when I approached the other women about such a meeting all but one woman showed interest. I plan to organise a social gathering for these women once the thesis is submitted, but have made them aware that doing this will end their anonymity. While I have raised some complexities of accessing and interviewing women through my own networks in my "home" rural community, I have chosen to focus on the substantive outcomes of these interviews rather than being too reflexive for the purposes of this thesis. Refer to Nancy Naples' (1997) discussion of her experiences as an "insider/outsider" in rural Iowa.

Doing rural research in a location where I was considered an insider by some and an outsider by others posed some interesting issues. Anderson (1993:75) sees her strength, as an author, in being a woman from a farm background; farm people often view themselves as quite distinct from other groups in society, making it difficult to speak to outsiders. Because of my farming and local background I was seen as an insider. There was the potential for the younger women to identify with me as we were all similar ages and studied in tertiary institutions over the same decade. For some of the older women who have known my family for years and were my previous teachers, I was seen as "my parents' daughter" or an ex-student when interviewing, rather than a researcher. It was important to keep clear boundaries as a researcher so that what was said in confidence in an interview stayed there. That was particularly important for my credibility as a person who might go back and live in the rural community at a future time in my life.

Somerset notes that, "The nature of interviewing in the country is such that it is hardly possible for anyone to make more than one call in a day" (Somerset 1974:102). That is due to the distance traveled between interviews; however, I tended to organise two interviews a day and over-commit myself. The social interaction before and after each interview, that included most women expressing their hospitality whether interviews were in the morning, afternoon or evening, also took time. At one home I was given fresh scones and jam for morning tea, while other women shared a variety of cakes and biscuits with me over cups of tea during the interviews. I was warmly welcomed and on one occasion stayed for lunch,¹⁷ having turned down other invitations, usually because I had another interview planned.

Overall the process of learning to be an independent researcher has been valuable. However, at times during this research my identities were challenged. Periodically I had to distance myself from my work because it became too personal. My identities became woven with those I interviewed. The challenges came from new ways of looking at things I had taken for granted or women sharing experiences that reinforced my own growing up in Hurstfield and Aradale. Academic and personal boundaries were continually being crossed as I interviewed a distant relative, women who had taught me, as I heard personal stories of women who had flatted with my teachers, and many other connections between the women, my family and friends.¹⁸

1.7 The Thesis

This thesis incorporates four main substantive chapters, reflecting the order of the women coming into the community. In Chapters Two and Three I introduce the eight women who were interviewed; they are divided into their respective age groupings. Those born in the 1940s and 1950s, whom I have called the "40 to 50 something" women, or the older generation, are introduced in Chapter Two, while those born in the 1960s, the "30 something" women, or the younger generation, are represented in Chapter Three. These two chapters begin with discussion of the social and historical context in which the women's lives are positioned. This is followed by a brief life history for each woman written from her respective interview transcript, using as many of her own stories and ontological narratives as possible.

¹⁷ I answered many sensitive questions about my own personal background that the woman was interested in, so lunch was a great opportunity to put my reciprocal principles into practice. Middleton (1993:78) named similar interactions in her research as "a consciousness-raising process."

¹⁸ When I phoned one "30 something" woman, my close friend, who was baby-sitting, answered. I thought I had dialled the wrong number. After regaining my composure I asked to speak to the "30 something" woman without identifying myself. When my friend later asked about this incident my response was very general, including discussing problems associated with my "insider/outsider" status. I would rather have said, "Yes, it was me," but ethically I knew I could not disclose whom I was interviewing to my friend.

With an overview of the lives, stories and work of those interviewed, I proceed in Chapter Four to explore the different identities with which these women associate, ranging from teacher, wife and mother through to farmer. These identities are not fixed or essential despite the majority of the women saying, "*I am me*" when asked what uniquely characterises them in this community. Throughout their interviews the women present a multiplicity of selves. The ontological narratives they share often disrupt the narrowly defined public narratives that exist more generally for women in rural communities. Yet at the same, or other, times they will collude with these public narratives. These ontological narratives reflect the way the women negotiate their lives and identities within this rural community.

Having established the women's personal identities, Chapter Five then focuses on the wider community that the women live in: how it shapes their identities as a community member, as an outsider/newcomer or an insider/local; and in turn how they shape that community. I explore the number of communities they belong to (both geographic and symbolic) and how they define their "sense of belonging" to these communities. I have structured the thesis this way so that the women's own ontological narratives are introduced to the reader before I analyse them, using Somers' conceptual narrativity in Chapters Four and Five, in relation to the public narratives in existence.

I conclude, in Chapter Six by returning to Somers' concept of narrative identity/ies and outline the three themes that have emerged. The first is that rural women teachers narrate multiple identities, which shift over time, space and in relation to the context they are in. The second theme is the resistance and acceptance of public narratives as the women continually negotiate their identities in different relational settings. The third theme is the temporal context in which these stories are told. I discuss that the women negotiate their multiple identities into what appears to be a more essential "*me*" while also belonging to multiple communities (either defined geographically or symbolically). The positions they identify with in terms of insider or outsider status in each community are relational to that context. For example, whether the setting is rural, with their urban families, in a teaching role, at home as mother, out shopping or being a community member, or taking on local status in relation to tourists yet being outsiders compared to "born and bred" locals. All these identities are real but relational to the time and place of that experience. Generationally different and similar stories are discussed, as are the specific narrative identities the women constitute. I end with some suggestions for future research and my final reflections, which incorporate feedback from the women interviewed.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LIFE HISTORIES OF THE "40 TO 50 SOMETHING" GENERATION

The story of a life is less than the actual life, because the story told is selective, partial, contextually constructed and because the life is not yet over. But the story of a life is also more than the life, the contours and meanings allegorically extending to others, others seeing themselves, knowing themselves through another's life story, re-visioning their own, arriving where they started and knowing "the place for the first time" (Richardson 1997:6).

2.1 The Life History Introductions

These brief life histories are based on at least one interview with each of the eight women. The four women in this chapter were born in the 1940s and 1950s, during World War II or during the post-war baby boom, while the women of the next generation, born in the 1960s, are introduced in Chapter Three. I divided the women into two generations because they were born at significantly different times in our history. Despite their birth dates spanning less than thirty years, the period between the 1940s and 1960s was one of major social change for women (Barrington and Gray 1981:xv). The historical, social, economic, political, and educational context of these women's lives is briefly discussed in Section 2.2 for the "40 to 50 something" women and in Section 3.3 for the "30 something" women. At the same time it is important to remember that the women's stage in the life cycle is more important than their actual age. Of the eight stages in the family life cycle presented by Rollins and Feldman (cited in Ritchie 1978:156) the "40 to 50 something" women are captured in three stages: stage five, having teenagers; stage six, the eldest leaves home; and stage seven, the youngest leaves home. In contrast, the "30 something" women are at either stage one, early marriage, before children; or stage two, first years until the first infant is two.

The women are represented in their separate chapters, chronologically by year of birth, from the eldest to the youngest. Grace, Louise, Clair, Barbara (Chapter Two) and Sue (Chapter Three) were interviewed for the first time in 1998. All major identifying characteristics or involvements have been removed or changed. The names used are all pseudonyms in an effort to keep the women's anonymity. I asked all women to choose their own pseudonyms (Leibrich 1993:269), but they were happy with the names I had selected.

The life histories begin and end with the women's own words, stories or narratives. The opening excerpts are personal reflections about the number of women schoolteachers who have married farmers and/or broader comments about the rural community in which they reside. A one paragraph demographic summary of all women is given, as is some mention of their family background and/or childhood. Each life history ends with narratives of how the women perceive their identity or identities. Key themes emerged from the interviews, and I aimed to include as many themes as were relevant for each woman, including teacher training and life before Aradale, their first teaching position, arrival in Aradale or Hurstfield, teaching in a rural community, marriage and associated naming issues, motherhood and children, community and rural/farm life, rural and urban differences including extended family and friends, and financial status.

Each life history includes as many excerpts as possible from the woman's own telling of her story, in order to reflect how she saw herself at the time of the interview, who she identified as and her own reality in these communities. However, in the end my interpretation of what the women told me was written down. My writing was theoretically informed as I told their life stories. Richardson (1990b:28) states, "As qualitative researchers, we can more easily write as situated, positioned authors, giving up, if we choose, our *authority* over the people we study, but not the responsibility of *authorship* of our texts." The women's life histories have been written as accurately as possible, but I could not capture the complete complexities of their lives in the time allocated. The stories they each told on the day could be quite different from those told on another day, and in some instances this was the case. I returned to visit the women after they had seen their respective transcripts and life history first drafts. After reflecting on their initial stories some women wanted to make alterations in terms of protecting their anonymity further, while others were happy just to add more information, filling in gaps they had not previously thought important. Their feedback was incorporated into the final draft of these life histories (Middleton 1993:73). On a practical level, the words that appear in **bold lettering** were spoken with greater emphasis than the rest of the sentence. I have chosen to talk about "rural women" in this thesis although those I interviewed used the word country and rural interchangeably, they often spoke of "country women." One woman described adults as "boys" and "girls;" Clair used this more informal or colloquial language particularly for unmarried adults, denoting their status as buddies. These words also carry particular gendered connotations about socially acceptable behaviour. For example, "boys" out drinking with their mates implies a hooligan element which has been tolerated in rural communities, more so than women socialising "for a girls night out" which is moderated by public expectations.

In Section 2.3, Grace (b 1940) is introduced; in Section 2.4, Louise (b 1941); in Section 2.5, Clair (b 1953); and in Section 2.6, Barbara (b 1956). Their children ranged in age from "almost teenagers" through to adults who have left home; none of the women has grandchildren. Before introducing these women, however, I will outline the context in which their lives are set (Section 2.2). The chapter ends (Section 2.7) by drawing together common threads from these life histories, linking key themes back to the historical context and identifying why these life stories become the foundations for my analysis in Chapters Four and Five.

2.2 Setting the Context

New Zealand was characterised by a period of prosperity and complacency for the 25 years after World War II. The government sorted out "the worst economic inequalities, and most New Zealanders progressed from year to year in serene confidence that things would only go on getting better" (Sanders 1996:9). The social impact of the welfare state was significant for this generation. David Thomson (1996:51) describes the first "welfare generation" as being born between 1920 and 1945, which includes the two oldest women interviewed. This generation established homes, careers and families in the favourable conditions designed for them; they married earlier and in greater numbers than the generation before them (Thomson 1996:51). Life was prosperous and the welfare state was an important stabiliser. Women became actively involved in all areas of the economy and the workforce during World War II, when men were overseas or joined the Home Guard. This increase in the number of women in the workforce led to greater financial security for families (Sanders 1996:52). In 1946 the family benefit became universal, with money paid to all mothers or guardians of children aged less than sixteen (Sinclair 1984:270-1). A further change in 1960 allowed for the capitalisation of the family benefit to be used principally for raising a deposit to buy a house (Thorns and Sedgwick 1997:117). During the post war decades the taxpayers, like the parents of those interviewed, got more out of the welfare state than they would have put in (Thomson 1996:25). From the late 1940s, the postwar baby boomers started filling the schools; "by 1956 close to a third of the population was under the age of 14, and primary rolls doubled in the 25 years after the war" (Sanders 1996:23).¹ New Zealand's population increased from 1.7 million to 3 million during the 30-year baby boom (Sanders 1996:52).

¹ The context of this generation's school experiences during and post-war is outlined from both the students' and teachers' perspectives in Middleton and May (1997:100-212). This context includes overflowing classrooms and additional prefabricated buildings to meet the demand of increasing school rolls, and the return of married teachers during the post-war shortages. Kindergarten, primary and secondary schooling is discussed, as are the equality of opportunities and cultural differences that emerged during the 1950s and 1960s.

From an economic perspective the last sixty years has seen many changes. David Thorns and Charles Sedgwick (1997:98) characterise 1935 to 1965 as a period of reconstruction because the economy was reorganised around import substitution and manufacturing support by a regime of licenses and controls. The result was full employment and expansion with real wages rising through the post war years. However, during the 1970s and 1980s an economic crisis started to develop with the loss of traditional European export markets when Britain joined the EEC in 1972 (Sinclair 1984:308). This was compounded by the world's second oil crisis in 1979 (McRobie 1992:395). The National government introduced "think big" programmes as a solution. These were not sustainable, and in 1984 the fourth Labour government was voted in, bringing about major restructuring in both government and private sectors over the next six years (Thorns and Sedgwick 1997:98). This restructuring, particularly the removal of subsidies,² had a major impact on rural life.

Historically, farming had been the backbone of the New Zealand economy. That was still the case when this generation arrived in Aradale. As the economy expanded from the 1950s onwards farming prospered, and further benefited from government initiated subsidies. In 1984, 40 per cent of rural people's gross income came from the government; within a year almost all subsidies were removed (Federated Farmers 1994:i). This change had major social implications for rural people. In particular, women returned to paid employment during the rural downturn to supplement declining farm income. These earnings provided extra farm expenditure and essential farm maintenance for almost half the women in a 1989 study (Ponter 1996:109). In some districts where farmers had high debt burdens and financial pressures, up to 82 per cent of women surveyed noted their off-farm earnings as important, or very important, to survival (Taylor and McCrostie Little 1995:83-8).

The historical context of education over the 40 to 50 year lives of these women also changed dramatically. The education budget has varied with three high periods of expenditure: the first, in 1958 at 17.7 per cent of the total government expenditure; the second, during 1963-64 at 17.8 to 18 per cent; and the third, from 1972 to 1976, with education spending being consistently between 17.1 and 17.7 per cent (Thorns and Sedgwick 1997:110-1). In the 1980s and early 1990s state funding of schools started to be restricted, placing "far greater demands upon parents for 'supplementary' funding and 'voluntary' time" (Thomson 1996:65). During the prosperity of the late 1950s and 1960s

² Other changes included the abolition of import licensing and reduced tariff levels; the freeing of interest rates, floating the exchange rate, and lifting of foreign exchange controls; the deregulation of the banking and finance sectors, airlines, the wheat industry, and other sectors; the creation of state-owned enterprises from government departments; and the introduction of GST (Fairweather 1989:1). Unemployment, which was low through the 1940s to 1960s, rose dramatically between 1984 and 1994, reflecting this major restructuring (Thorns and Sedgwick 1997:117).

Grace and Louise first taught at Hurstfield Primary School (HPS), while Clair taught full-time in the late 1970s. Each of these three women was one of a staff of four. All four "40 to 50 something" women interviewed relief taught at HPS during the last four decades of the twentieth century. Grace relief taught from the early 1960s through to the mid 1970s; Louise continued from the early 1960s through to the mid 1990s; while Clair and Barbara both taught in a relief capacity from the mid 1970s to the mid 1980s.

Country Service was an important feature of the education system in the middle of the twentieth century, ensuring a supply of teachers to work in rural and hard to staff urban schools. Country Service was introduced in 1938 for primary schoolteachers and in 1949 for secondary schoolteachers, and ended completely in 1982 although the scheme had softened before then (McGeorge 2000). Teachers had to work two years at a rural school before they could move up the salary scale, so this service was best done early in their teaching career (Sanders 1996:23).³ Country Service played an important social role in rural communities, primarily by reversing the migratory trend of young women shifting to urban areas for employment and training. Here was a counter migration of professional people bringing their skills to rural New Zealand for a minimum of two years. Single women teachers were regarded as being highly mobile and as having fewer rights than their married peers (Middleton and May 1997:87). These women were young and many stayed to reside permanently in rural communities after meeting and marrying a farmer.

For rural teachers in the latter half of the twentieth century, there were two prominent social clubs before they amalgamated. Each attracted the membership of young people in its local district. For rural women the Country Girls' Club (CGC), more commonly known as Country Girls, was important. It was established to "train young women for citizenship, homemaking and community responsibility within the farming sector" (Day 1993:396). The club began after World War II as the male equivalent of Young Farmers' Club (YFC) for "girls" aged 14 to 30 years of age. The CGC and YFC were separate clubs who joined for social outings until the number of rural youth declined in the late 1960s, and the two clubs amalgamated in 1973; Country Girls was effectively submerged in the new YFC as they were outnumbered in membership by three to one (Day 1993:398).

³ Teacher training for this generation was salaried. Straight out of teachers' training college, the trainees undertook their probationary assistants year; once the students had been assessed by the Department of Education's Inspector they became certified as a teacher (Middleton and May 1997:207). Employment was by one-year appointments, decided by an Education Board that did not interview staff or arrange for them to meet the respective school committees. For a full discussion of teachers' training for this generation see Middleton and May (1997:198-212). The general curriculum has changed in New Zealand schools during the 1960s to the 1990s; refer to McCulloch (1992) for this context.

Another key institution in rural New Zealand has been the Agricultural and Pastoral (A & P) Association. Historically, A & P Associations were founded by the uppermost stratum of New Zealand society in the late nineteenth century: this group was comprised of bankers, wealthy merchants and manufacturers, run-holders and larger farmers (Olssen 1992:272). In the late twentieth century the A & P Show is a day when the town meets the country, whether at a local or provincial level. The local show is a focal point of rural life with 110 A & P Associations in New Zealand. Each year the gala days, or shows, are held in spring or summer. At each show machinery is displayed; stock and children's pets are judged; and competitions for the best fruits, vegetables, preserves, cakes and a wide range of other home products, including craft objects, are held (McLauchlan 1995:17-8). The A & P Show is a day out for the whole family, with adults and children entering the competitions, showing their stock, and/or produce.

A further central institution in the life of women of this generation has been the Plunket Society, which was established in 1907 to train women in household management and motherhood. Plunket was very important for young rural mothers who lived away from their own families of origin, like the women introduced in this chapter. Olssen (1992:264) says, "The isolated conjugal family, organized and run by the wife-mother and centred on the proper care and training of children, had become the norm for much of society." Plunket assisted in maintaining this norm. Playcentre is a second organisation that has been central for rural mothers. During the 1950s and 1960s, as a result of the post-war baby boom, playcentres spread beyond the main cities and into small towns, expanding "deep into the rural areas" (Middleton and May 1997:109). Playcentre provided social contact for parents and children alike.

The late 1960s and early 1970s were a time of social upheaval in the Western world, including New Zealand (Middleton and May 1997:213). The changes of the 1960s were social rather than political, technical rather than legislative, individual rather than public (Chapman 1992:382). It was the decade of "sex, drugs and rock n roll," the rise of mass protests and social movements, and dramatically changing roles for women. The contraceptive pill was introduced to New Zealand in 1962, allowing a new sexual freedom not previously experienced (Macdonald 1993:143). The second wave of feminism began in 1970-71 with Women's Liberation groups meeting to articulate issues of equal pay, restrictive social stereotyping, objectification of women's bodies and sexual exploitation (Macdonald 1993:161). The consciousness-raising groups that evolved through this decade were an important outlet for New Zealand women searching for their identities (Novitz 1989:57). In 1973 the Domestic Purposes Benefit was introduced, stirring up debate over the traditional roles of wife and mother (Macdonald 1993:163). Legislative reform brought in

equal pay policy in 1972, while discrimination on the basis of sex, race, and religion was outlawed in 1977, and non-earning spouses were recognised equally in material terms in their marriage relationship with the introduction of the Matrimonial Property Act 1976 (Macdonald 1993:164). The 1970s saw a liberalisation of women's roles in society, with a shift from the private sphere at home as housewife and mother into the public sphere of paid work, careers, professional training, and the freedom to live independently of male partners.

Throughout the twentieth century developments in transportation and telecommunications have weakened rural localism, notably the automobile and the telephone (Olssen 1992:281). Computers are now common in workplaces and at home with the whole world being accessible via the internet. The introduction of television in 1960 (Chapman 1992:382) has also altered our social habits, with the average New Zealander watching more than twenty hours' television per week (Simpson 1992:579). We are now living in a highly globalised society as we start the twenty-first century. Social relations no longer exist solely between people within the same location, as was the norm in the 1940s.

The life histories of the women interviewed are set in this social, economic and political context. This is the background from which the women's stories are told. Grace and Louise were born in the 1940s, during World War II, while Clair and Barbara were born in the 1950s, as part of the post-war baby boom.

2.3 Grace (b 1940)

*Well I suppose looking back upon **my time** you had to do so many years Country Service that was compulsory. And so you used to get out and do your Country Service and get that behind you so that would probably be the stimulant for that [teachers marrying farmers]. And also I think in later times the job options in town might have been taken and the country ones are on the back burner a bit. And I mean it could also be, in this area, the lure of the [tourist attraction] people that want to do a bit more sport are closer to that too.*

*A local used to be someone who was born (starts to laugh), born and bred, in the area and...it seems like you have got to really **serve** your apprenticeship and I think the apprenticeship is really with time. And I think to really be a local you have got to join in with things in the community too and not just be on the periphery. I think you have got to be prepared to shoulder some of the responsibility and join in. That would be my definition of a local. ...I feel like I have served my apprenticeship. I mean you have to have, you can't have locals marrying locals all the time; you have to have something coming in from the outside. What do they call it, hybrid vigour or whatever?*

Grace, who is 58 years of age, has lived in the Hurstfield community for 34 years. She originally taught at the local primary school, 37 years ago, for two terms, where she met John who farmed nearby. Grace later returned to marry John (34 years ago) and continued to teach in a relief capacity for at least another decade. She and John now farm in partnership. They have two adult children, Murray and Vicki, who have both left home. Murray lives locally at Hurstfield with his wife Sue (who was also interviewed), and Vicki is working overseas. Grace identifies herself as a Pakeha.

Grace grew up in a major South Island city, with her family. Her parents both worked in the city where she and her younger brothers were schooled. Grace has fond memories of her time as a daygirl at a private school. While she resided predominantly in this urban setting, Grace recalls that rural friends of her father's also influenced her background:

*I perhaps have never really been a **really city sort of girl**. ...I mean my father had lots of friends that lived on farms and we used to go and visit them out there in the weekends and we had such wonderful times. And I loved the open spaces and being able to do different things rather than being cooped up in a quarter acre section and just go to the pictures or a dance or whatever.... I'm not really a real, real city girl.*

Going on holidays with a friend was significant for Grace in the late 1950s. As a teacher trainee she recalls, *"It was a very **different** time because you were very closed, you were at home and you were trying to sort of spread your wings to get away. I can remember going on the **first holiday** that was away from **home**."* It was a real achievement *"to be going on **your own**"* and organising everything. Of great significance was coming home on the train and seeing her University Entrance results in the newspaper because she had studied at night school. *"It was **hard slog**...seeing those results in the paper as we were coming home from [holiday]. It was just **absolutely incredible!**"*

Grace gained her Teachers Training Certificate in the same city she had grown up in, having come straight from school to training college. Training took two years and then Grace did a probationary assistant year, about 1960, in an urban *"school that wasn't in a particularly **wealthy area** and I had a good cross-section of children."* After that she relief taught at a brand new city school, with a class of 51-52 children at standard four level. She remembers not having enough textbooks, being given chalk and art paper to last a specified time. *"It was very, very hard teaching because [of] the whole school, I think **the only permanent member of staff** was the first assistant and the headmaster."* Grace and a friend decided to start applying for jobs elsewhere in order to save money for their overseas travel. *"I had to fill out a form, yes put your qualifications, your interests and your strengths and things like that."* There was no interview, the Education Board just appointed teachers to the job without any face to face contact with the prospective headmaster.

Her father was someone to whom Grace listened when she was choosing where to apply for teaching jobs. Grace thought the lower South Island sounded good, but was swayed when her father advised, *"Don't be so silly going down there it is just **so cold** down there in the winter, it is just so over the top so forget about that."* At that stage she got a job at Hurstfield and her friend got one at the neighbouring primary school. Before Grace left to teach at Hurstfield, the headmaster warned her about moving. She recollects:

*He said to me before I left this school, "Oh you are going into **jaguar country**" and I had no idea what he meant by jaguar country whether he meant **cars**, or the **wealth** of the area or just quite what.*

Grace admits she never found out what he meant but she now has her own inside knowledge. She reflects that socially the support she got from the parents and wider Hurstfield community was outstanding. Financially the area was rich because the natural climate and landscape ensured most farming people got a secure income from the land back then, in addition to the agricultural economy being subsidised and protected.

Grace was not prepared for her arrival to teach at Hurstfield Primary School, having only looked around it only once when her parents drove out one day. Grace accepted the offer of board from the Roses, who lived in Hurstfield. Mrs Rose was known as the hub of Hurstfield and helped Grace make connections with other locals and different sporting clubs. This was a time when she milked their cows and helped plant potatoes. Because Grace had no transport she relied on others to take her places, like the Saturday night dances around the county. She reminisced that these were fun times.

Teaching in a rural school, Grace also found some contrasts with her urban teaching experience. She could not keep the children in after school because they had buses to catch; however, they always did their homework, and the boys in the classroom would talk about the different kind of tractors they had on the farm. Grace was astounded to find that one of the children's mothers saved her egg money to buy a new car! *"But Hurstfield was such a fabulous [school], it was some of the **happiest teaching times** in my life, it was just **absolutely amazing**."* The children at Hurstfield School used their pencils perhaps six times and then threw them away, whereas in town schools Grace recalled she had to tell children to get a new pencil when it was one and half to two inches long. She says:

*...[I] noticed the difference between country and town children because the country children are very resourceful, they're very reliable, the town children are not. The country children **look** for things to do, they **know** what to do, and they are responsible. I couldn't say the same for town children.*

Grace believes that country children are given jobs on the farm and that makes them more responsible. *"For example, having to look after a lamb or a calf or chickens for the A & P [Show]. And flower or vegetable gardens, you know, those country projects, the Hurstfield*

Boys and Girls Agricultural Club, that you used to have to do, well looking after all those things, that is responsibility." She also talks about the vegetable plot at the back of the school and the opportunity for the senior children to be on a roster mowing the school lawns.

During her time boarding at Hurstfield, Grace met her prospective husband John. She describes the Roses' place as being a marriage bureau:

*Mrs Rose said, "We have **just** got the right man for you and he just lives down the road.... He went to [a well-known single sex boarding school], just the whole thing, **just right** for you." I mean it was the biggest marriage bureau down there that you could **ever imagine**, I mean Louise Armitage got caught in there too!*

Grace actually met John biking home from school on her second day, quite independently of Mrs Rose. She recalls that John was shifting a mob of sheep and she had never been through a mob of sheep before, and she was especially anxious because it was a gravel road and she was wary of falling off her bike. *"He had the audacity to say, "Oh you must be the new schoolteacher!" And I said, "Yes, what are you doing?" He said, "I am just taking the sheep for a walk!" And I thought oh my God, what about this!"* She later met him out at a sporting occasion and their relationship blossomed from there.

Grace went overseas with her friend as planned and corresponded with John during her absence. She stayed away for less than a year because John told her the Hurstfield headmaster was retiring. Grace decided to come back for his farewell *"because he was such a nice guy"*; she had enjoyed and respected him as a colleague. Eighteen months after arriving back in New Zealand, in the middle of the 1960s, Grace returned to Hurstfield permanently to marry John. She says:

*...another very big change was when we were first married and I went back relieving. That was **absolutely** unheard of for a married woman to go back to work and I copped an awful lot of flak for that.*

Grace says she *"quite definitely"* maintained her identity as a teacher after marriage. Some people still see her as a teacher *"when you speak up at meetings."* She also says that marrying John did not change her status.

In the 1960s it was radical for married women teachers to continue working. Grace certainly felt the pressure to conform to local people's expectations yet she continued relief teaching until midway through the 1970s. She remembers how good it felt being back in the classroom, *"You felt a refreshed person coming home, you didn't sort of feel so 'cabbagey' and it was lovely having the input of the children again."* Eventually Grace valued her independence to follow other interests too much and ceased being available to relief teach. She does not regret leaving the profession nor does she miss the calls at 7 am asking her to

teach. Grace has lots to do because being married to a farmer means she lives at the farming office:

I always class a farmer's wife as being a secretary/manager or a receptionist/manager; answering the phone or doing messages. And I found that quite strange at the beginning because I had to realise that you are actually living around a business.

She reflects that this is a contrast to city people who live and work in separate places and receive a set wage at the end of each week. Grace says with farming, "You can never guarantee that you would have 'x' amount of dollars at the end of each year."

Four years after marrying John, Grace became a mother. She found this difficult at the beginning because her mother did not live nearby and there were not the support networks that exist today, except for Plunket. Being one of the first of her peers to have a child, "It was quite a **shock to the system** to have this little baby who **took over everything**." But Grace reflects on the importance of spending quality time raising the children. She says it was a good time to "join things and do things and accept the responsibility when your children are little." It meant life was busy but she states the importance of having time for children when they are teenagers:

*And you are able to spend quality time with them as they got older, in their later teen years, when the kids really need a bit of help, a bit of guidance. And you could just give them that guidance, not that I am the most **brilliant of mothers!** We all learn as we go don't we?*

Grace's first child was a son and she found that people automatically thought he would take over the farm. This kind of attitude, she finds "small minded and very petty." Grace also admits, "My family is the most important thing in my life." Both Murray and Vicki went to the same single-sex boarding schools in the city as their parents had attended the generation before. Grace reminisces that things have changed dramatically from her time at school to when Vicki was there in the 1980s. She says now there are a lot of "new rich at the school with their big vehicles."

Rural life for Grace has meant a huge change in her lifestyle, but she has been a strong supporter of women's rights throughout. She says, "I am very **very strong** on women's things. I am very **passionate** about that; I mean equal rights to a **degree**." However, Grace still believes that men should make the decisions. She acknowledges that:

*...farming was a very **male** thing. The husband or the farmer was in charge of everything, did everything, owned the land and then...you gradually sort of got a partnership. I mean I can remember when we were first farming and we sat down and thought about it and thought well it would be a good idea if I could sign cheques as well. Because, if something happened [to] John and he was in hospital and he couldn't sign cheques then it would be to my benefit, and his benefit, that we signed cheques. Well that was **really radical** at that time and I was questioned about that but we stuck to it and we*

*did it, so gradually people, **women** have got those rights now, that is organised. There was the change with the farming partnership and we were one of the first ones who did that too, you just didn't have your husband's initials and your initials on the mailbox and on the **mail**. So that has been another very big change.... But I was very **very strong** on women's rights.*

Grace talks about how she likes challenging stereotypes of men and their perspectives. She has taken John along to hear the symphony orchestra play in the city, which he thoroughly enjoyed, so she is able to get some of her cultural and creative needs met away from the rural environment.

The A & P Show in Hurstfield is something that Grace has given a lot of time to over the years. She describes the two different roles she has undertaken: *"I was involved locally in the A & P because John was President of the A & P and wives get heavily committed in that. And I did my stint as a steward in the show for quite some considerable time [years]."* On another level, at the provincial A & P show Grace was concerned one year that women's rights were not being taken seriously. Her comments to the exhibitor concerned raised the issue that the competition prizes were male oriented. She says:

*You **won** for first prize a chainsaw and the second prize was wet weather gear and I said to the people organising it, "That is just absolutely crazy, why do the prizes have to be geared for **men** all the time? ...Why can't you offer them a **meal** out or a **weekend** at a hotel or something?" "Oh we hadn't really thought about that."*

So at the next year's A & P show the prizes from the same exhibitor were changed to be more suitable for both men and women.

Grace does not want to be *"classed as a rural woman perhaps dress wise."* These thoughts stem from her school days and seeing countrywomen *"in the city on a Wednesday"* in their suits and brogue shoes. Grace later adds, *"Rural women always have this image of a skirt, jersey and pearls with the collar [up]."* Grace recounts a story from when she was engaged; a school friend imagined her out with gumboots and a bucket to feed pigs. *"I thought well I am **never ever** going to be like that!"* In the end Grace concedes she is *"perhaps half in half"* a rural woman.

Grace keeps her connections to the world outside Hurstfield by not being too insular in the groups she is involved in:

I have never been to Women's Institute because I am not sort of interested in whether your sponge roll is bigger than mine is. They are petty little trivial things to me and I would much rather go and do something which has a bit more "meat" about it or I didn't like going to women's groups when they discuss itty bitty little back-chatty sort of little things. I would much rather go and discuss what has been happening in the Reserve Bank or something like the greenhouse effect.... My lifeline here would be my National Radio

programme, I could do without most other things but take that away I would be sunk.

Grace prefers to be involved in community groups locally that are goal oriented, like Plunket. She has also helped start up a new club in Aradale, based on an interest she is passionate about. The membership base is made up of local people. This was a major turning point for Grace because at the time she did not feel a newcomer or a local but was "*a little bit of both.*" Despite being a trained teacher she had previously not been confident speaking out at meetings but found that being pushed into running the meetings was beneficial. She also acknowledges the support of John's relations during this time; they introduced her to a wide range of local people because they were that bit older than Grace. She notes that a whole generation of mothers aged between 35 and 45 are not involved in community work because of their paid work commitments. The example Grace uses is the aforementioned club and Plunket: both have many members in the 65 to 70 year old bracket, in Grace's age group (late 50s), and younger members, but are missing the 35 to 45 grouping. She comments that people are now too busy working to survive to support community groups. Grace heard, "*Just recently that something between the order of 70 and 80 per cent of farms where people are earning off farm income. That is a high percentage.*"

Grace's thoughts on what was most crucial in creating her sense of belonging in this community are as follows:

I think loyalty, I think that would be very high on the list and I think being yourself. I don't change from one thing, from one minute to the next, I'm me and I'm the same day in and day out. I try to be, well I hope that I am very loyal to people and I hope that I can be helpful to people and that if people want some help then I am only too happy to do it whatever it is. If people want to confide in me then that is fine, it won't go any further than that and that is it. Reliability is important to me.

There are three communities Grace feels she belongs to, Hurstfield where she lives, Aradale where she goes to meetings and then the wider Southview district. She highlights that some people have not heard of Aradale, yet others know it by its distinctive landscape. So it depends who she is talking to as to where she identifies home to be. Grace terms "local" as Hurstfield where she lives and "*community is the wider area.*"

To conclude, Grace says recurrently, "*I am me! ...I am just me and I don't think that I will change.*" She identifies herself as a strong woman:

*I haven't got what I really call **close**, close friends. I mean I have a lot of friends in the same sort of situation but no real close friends because I am a private, **private** person. I am not the type of person that if something happens I will run to an agency or to friends for support; my strength comes from myself.*

2.4 Louise (b 1941)

*Several of my friends in the North Island were teachers and they have married [farmers]. ...I suppose we say we were new blood for the farmers! ...We laugh and joke about that and say that we were the only new blood that came into the district. Probably especially too if the boys had gone away to school...and maybe they hadn't kept in contact with the girls in the area. That might be the case and then all these new people come into the district. There were some others before us because I know that everyone used to laugh at the Roses being the matchmakers with the new teachers, finding these husbands for them! I guess the girls that come to teach in the rural area have a **feeling** for that **area** and so therefore they are more accepting of being married into the district. ...Not a lot of girls stay in the district, they go out to work don't they? They go **away** from the district to find work and that is probably another **drain** of local girls isn't there, so I suppose we really were **new blood** coming into the area.*

Louise, who is 56 years old, originally came to teach at Hurstfield Primary School. That was 34 years ago and she has now been married to Steve, a Hurstfield farmer, for almost 32 of those years. Steve bought the mixed crop and sheep farm that they live on from his father and now also grazes dairy cows as an important source of income. Louise has part ownership of a neighbouring block of land through a family trust. Louise and Steve live alone in their family home as all three adult children have left. Their eldest, Peter, works in the closest city, in rural related employment, but returns to help at busy times. Chris, their middle child, is now living overseas, having trained and worked in his chosen profession in the North Island. Their youngest, Joanna, is a university student in a South Island city. Louise identifies herself as a New Zealand European with a very soft spot for the Maori; this stems from her Maori Club involvement in teachers' college days.

Louise had an urban upbringing throughout her childhood and teenage years, living in a hill suburb with her parents and younger sister. She says, "*I was born in [a major South Island city] and lived there until I was 21.*" Each day she remembers walking a mile up the hill to school, "*It was like a country district really; it was sole charge I think when I first started and then it became a two teacher [school].*" Both her parents came from a farming background and Louise had relatives on farms nearby. She remembers, "*We used to stay on **farms** almost every school holidays and at Christmas holidays we would go and stay at [semi-rural place] and stay in a bach or holiday house.*" Louise was born during the war and recalls her father, who was in the Home Guard, had built an air-raid shelter at the bottom of their quarter acre section. She recalls going down there at the age of five or six and pretending to milk cows with a bucket from the house, "*So I used to play farms quite a bit...the right sister came to the country!*"

Louise was baptised and confirmed at church and later taught Sunday school. Her mother was also very involved in church activities and in particular led the women's group. Louise vividly remembers, *"When we were little children we used to kneel at the end of our beds but nobody was listening except God and your mother or sister."* Her father was an active supporter financially but did not attend church regularly. Sunday was the only day that Louise saw her father because his time and effort went into his own business. She says, *"We very seldom saw him...he worked Saturdays as well so it was a bit like a farm in a way because he wasn't at home until night."* Louise describes, *"Mum was the hands-on sort"* when it came to helping out others. Early on she learnt that, *"You helped other people who aren't as fortunate as you are."* This lesson in caring was so important it has stayed with Louise throughout life.

In the middle of the 1960s Louise returned with her parents and sister from a year overseas meeting her father's relatives. She had interviews at various travel agents but they all thought she would go teaching because that was her training. She says, *"They seemed to think that I was a bit old. I was only 22! That was old then because a lot of people got married at 22 or 23."* Consequently Louise:

...applied for air-hostessing and I was accepted but they said they wouldn't tell me how much they were going to pay me and so I said that I wasn't going to come. So I then thought I had better try and find a job somewhere and so I went into the Education Board and got a temporary job at Hurstfield for six weeks, so that is how I came to be here.

She chose Hurstfield Primary School out of three or four in the area because, *"I thought it would be fun coming into a country district."* Louise's parents drove her to the Roses, where she boarded. This was the first time she had lived away from home. She remembers, *"Mum and Dad were horrified because they thought, where are they leaving this girl, although we were used to shingle roads in the country."* Louise's father bought her a little car because she had put all her savings towards their overseas trip. It gave her the freedom to go to night meetings of Country Girls and other clubs in Aradale. It also meant not relying on the school bus to travel to and from work. Louise liked to keep longer hours than the children did.

The headmaster was very welcoming and she soon settled into school life. Louise liked the job, so applied for and got the permanent position when her six weeks was up. As a new teacher to Hurstfield, Louise recalls:

I think there is an expectation that you have got to be doing the right thing all the time and I felt that I could go home [to the city] and relax with my friends more easily than I could here.

Being a role model that the children would respect was important to Louise, yet she says; *"I had a lot of fun but never quite went overboard."* She feels that a teacher needs to keep a

little distance from families and their children. Louise states, "*That is something that has probably changed **now** from when I was teaching, for example, we would never have worn trousers to school.*" She taught for four years, as the Infant Mistress, at the four-teacher Hurstfield Primary School during the middle of the 1960s. Originally she intended staying for two years and then going overseas with friends, but they got married and Louise met Steve. She has never taught at a bigger school because her urban probationary assistant's year was at a four-teacher school. Louise describes it as, "*Really a rural/urban kind of school.*"

At the place she was boarding Louise was introduced to people of many different ages in the community:

*I really got **involved** because I knew I had to get involved. I boarded with the Roses and so I joined [names a sport], I was in [an active cultural organisation], I went to Country Girls, and I was asked to do quite a few things. I did go home quite often at weekends, but then I used to stay down a lot more as I got involved here.*

She became friendly with the other two teachers at Hurstfield who were a similar age to Louise. She declined the invitation to teach Sunday school at Aradale, but the church became more important to her on the weekends she did not return to the city.

Louise still has fond memories of boarding at the Roses', with whom she keeps in contact with today. She reflects:

...many of those who stayed at the Roses' found a husband to be! And it was quite interesting the people I was told about because some people were a lot older than I was.... They [the Roses] did actually introduce me to Steve but I don't think they thought we would end up together!

She admits they were friends for a long time because he was younger than Louise was. They were engaged at the end of her second year at Hurstfield and married at the end of the third year. Louise met some of Steve's extended family when she attended an all girls' church school and so felt she knew Steve. She recounts, "*I married him because I was **in love** with him and **loved** him...the lifestyle suited me and I felt I could fit into it quite easily. I knew the family background well.*" They are best friends.

After her marriage, in the late 1960s, Louise continued teaching for a year despite the attitudes of the locals frowning upon her; "*I would have found it quite lonely if I hadn't...it was a good transition having that year.*" Louise says that Steve respected her teaching career and her city background. She states, "*When we got **married** I belonged to Young Wives in Aradale and we didn't go to church often...because we were busy with the garden and establishing our lives.*" However, when the children were born they started attending church more regularly as a family. All the children were baptised and they decided to attend

the Aradale church that Steve belonged to, which was a different denomination from that of Louise's upbringing.

Louise and Steve made a conscious decision not to have children straight after marriage because Steve was younger. She says, *"I had always felt that you should get to know each other reasonably well before you started having children who could have been divisive."* However she recalls, *"I remember feeling really cross with people who kept asking us when we were going to have **children**."* Their first child was born about two years after marriage and Louise is positive about being a mother:

*...having the **children** has been a **huge** learning experience and one I have **thoroughly** enjoyed and I don't regret a minute of any of the time I have not been teaching. If I had to choose a career I would choose that over anything else and I don't think nowadays that it [motherhood] is looked on, as having the same respect as it should have. It is downgraded and I think that is a terrible pity.*

Louise says that the most important thing in her life is *"my family and my extended family...and **their happiness**."* She reflects, *"In the earlier days it was my job and it was old-fashioned I suppose...to bring up the children basically while he [Steve] was out on the farm."* Louise was following her mother's role, being there to discipline and take children to clubs and sports practices. She felt it was important to be responsible for caring and raising the children. As a result Louise and Steve took turns at baby-sitting and seldom went out together. Before the age of 30 Louise was a member of Country Girls and Steve belonged to Young Farmers. The wives would gather informally when their husbands met. She says, *"So we had a great fellowship then because the girls, the wives, used to go to one wife's house and take all their **babies** while the young farmers went off to Young Farmers."*

There was a gap of almost a decade between Louise's eldest child, Peter, and the birth of her youngest, Joanna:

*I was older [36] when I had Joanna and I was much happier with where I was in life. I had accepted that **I was me**, and that it was all right to be me whereas earlier on I think I was trying to find **who** this person **was**.*

Louise recalls that the boys were almost a different generation from their sister and things changed dramatically in the ten-year gap. They were a great example to Joanna and just adored her. *"She was fifteen, I was early fifties and a **little bit remote** from that age group because most of the parents of teenagers were in their thirties and forties"*, Louise explains. Louise valued the opinions of her older sons when it came to raising Joanna and acknowledges that Steve was more involved in the upbringing of their daughter than he was with the boys.

The children were all schooled at Hurstfield Primary School and then went to Aradale for the start of their secondary schooling. Louise says:

*...our children were really happy there and the only reason we sent them away, especially the boys, was because we thought that Peter really showed early signs of wanting to be a farmer. And we thought that if we didn't get him out of the district he would **never** know anything else. So it was a growing thing for him and Chris was ready once Peter went. He was really keen to go too.*

However, when Joanna started school, Chris was at the Aradale secondary school and Peter was at boarding school in the city which meant a lot of running around. During the rural downturn of the 1980s Louise remembers taking the boys out from boarding school at the weekends and showing them the kind of houses they would be able to afford if they had to leave the farm. Economic reality forced her back to paid work in contrast to when the children were younger and she was a full-time mother. Louise had previously done unpaid work for Playcentre and Plunket; *"I have been on the Plunket committee for about 26 years."* The younger Plunket women appreciated the input and experience of the older committee members.

The church has become more important to Louise as the children have grown up; she has taken more leadership roles in the pastoral care team in the 1980s. She says:

...the parish is divided into four districts and we are in [names the district] and I have now become the coordinator of this district. I have four other women who help me with the visiting and we try and have activities in the district, such as morning coffees...open to anybody basically but we call it the [name of the district]. So we also ask neighbours if they would like to come.

Eight years ago Louise joined the Parish Council, which has strengthened her faith. Louise finds it easier to stand up in front of the congregation than she used to, but admits praying aloud for the preacher before church is still challenging. She adds, *"I am in the choir and I help clean the church and help out at funerals and whenever I'm needed."* Louise also writes letters for the district and has now taken on writing letters for the congregation more generally. Louise adds, *"From my church affiliations I have also been accepted as a chaplain, in...an inter-church group with about nine mainstream churches."* Louise explains that chaplains are contracted to workplaces like banks, hospitals or freezing works to meet with people on a confidential basis. She got the opportunity to apply for this position, her first ever job interview, a year ago after retiring from teaching. Since the early 1990s Louise has also been involved as a public dignitary in the wider community outside the church. She was thrilled to be nominated for this position and enjoys the work. Families that knew her as a teacher or people from church approach her in this role. In the last year she got involved further by joining the group's regional council, which meets in Southview.

Louise defines community as, *"Looking after each other and being conscious that there are*

others in your area." She feels as though she belongs to one community, the "greater Hurstfield/Aradale area" yet also acknowledges the city she grew up in as home too. She says:

*I don't think I see anybody as the outsiders, I try to make whoever **comes** feel **welcome**. ...But I don't see anybody as being an outsider, I would think that I am as much as an outsider as anyone because I wasn't **born** here.*

Aradale is a place in which she attends meetings at night and goes to church, but most of her shopping is done in Southview. The exception has been over the last year when Louise has been less mobile, as a result of health problems, and has preferred to shop for groceries locally in Aradale.

Life in a rural community is an important part of Louise's existence. She states, "*If I lived in the city I would possibly be a completely different person. I think I would still have the caring side of me.*" She states:

I love the lifestyle but I haven't always liked the pressures that have been put upon us to stay here. We struggled to stay when the downturn came... we took in boarders and I did extra teaching which was fortunate because it was available at the time. I did a lot of extra knitting for payment.

Louise says of her surroundings, "*I see **God** in all this really and I think that is why it is so much a part of **me**. It has a peace.*" She loves gardening and the peacefulness of land and nature. While Louise acknowledges that she does not always like the long hours that Steve works on the farm she is realistic about their lifestyle. She copes with the remoteness of living on a farm because, "*I don't mind my own space, in fact I love it...and I don't mind driving the car.*" Louise comments that urban people are often more concerned about driving long distances and she will drive through to the closest city and back in one day without thinking anything of it.

Some of Louise's city cousins are curious about farm life. They say, "***What do you do all day?***" Louise says she often bakes for people, writes letters, goes visiting, organises morning teas, gardens, does household chores, and attends meetings and seminars. She comments on another difference between urban and rural life: "*A lot of the urban children...are just **too** organised and when they are not **being** organised they are bored because they don't know how to organise or entertain themselves.*" She has raised her children in a way that gave them space to organise their own fun.

Louise does all the cooking, including for extras like their permanent worker whom she feeds lunch every day. Over summer there can be up to ten people working on the farm and then there are the shearers to feed at different times of the year. Louise and Steve have divided the tasks they each do. She says, "*He pursues the farming whereas I am*

inclined to do other things and that is something we have allowed each other, so we sometimes don't see a great deal of each other." However, Louise adds, "*I **have** helped in the shearing shed but I don't now. I don't do any tailing now; I don't do **anything** on the farm now apart from support Steve."*

Louise also comments on her suitability to this lifestyle; this is a place where she feels comfortable to be herself and can wear what she pleases:

*I think I was **suited to country life** more so than town life because I don't particularly enjoy dressing up. I like to be me, whereas in town you can't always be yourself, it depends where you go of course but sometimes you have to be somebody that you are not **quite**. ...Here I think I can be me and fit in anywhere because I can dress down or dress up or you can hide, we are very **lucky** in that way.*

She speaks about rural women by highlighting their homemaking skills, their ability to earn off-farm income and their practical nature, "*There is a **warmness** about countrywomen I think and a practicality about them; they are usually down to earth people."* Louise considers teachers to be organised people, and she says that was true particularly when she went back relief teaching at least one or two days a fortnight. Some days she did not know in advance she would be required. She says, "*I like to feel I am in control of the house, not it in control of me, sometimes it gets the other way around!"* As a permanent part-time teacher Louise worked one day a fortnight at Hurstfield Primary School and did other relieving until her retirement from teaching a year ago.

Contact with extended family in the city, especially her sister, Annette, is important to Louise. Louise says Annette loves the way people aid you in the country:

***She** is very good at it **herself** but many of them are working full-time jobs and don't have the time and probably don't even think about it really when you are in the country if you need help, you need help.*

Louise respects Steve's parents immensely; "*I also learnt much about living in the country from Steve's Mum and Dad. They have a very loving family relationship."* Living so close to one another could have been a problem but Louise feels accepted by them and Steve's mother looks on her as a daughter. Louise calls her parents-in-law Mum and Dad now that both her parents are dead. She considers herself very lucky.

Louise also values her financial independence and appreciates the money she received from her parents. It is kept separately in an account, which she administers for things like renovating the kitchen. However, Louise does admit:

*I found [it] really hard when I stopped teaching that I had no money of my own and I felt really guilty going and buying clothes for me with Steve's money. Even now I find that quite hard...he doesn't **give me any** money as*

*such but I go and buy **what I want**, he trusts me not to be foolhardy. ...I am proud of my budgeting for groceries and the way I monitor power usage.*

While Louise says she has "hang-ups" about money when it becomes an issue at church, she also knows that it has a place. She says, "*I am lucky that I have sufficient money and also that my parents provided well for me...I would hate it if it...ruled my life.*" Louise has been proud to watch Chris work hard and pay for his own professional training. She says, "*He is **doing it himself**...I know what a struggle it is for him and there have been times when he has been very low.*" Despite this they support him financially if required.

Louise identifies herself as a woman with close friends and a faith that never leaves her. She says, "*I am just me!*" Yet, with that "*me*" Louise identifies a multitude of selves. She is a different woman from the one who arrived to teach in Hurstfield 34 years ago. Louise sees herself today as:

*Me! I like to think that with Steve's help I am the one that keeps the family close and I really love having them home. ...But that still doesn't tell you who I think I am. I like to think that I am **fairly** strong and can face most things that can be worked through if something confronts me. I like to think that I can be of help...I am friendly to anybody no matter who or what or where they are. I enjoy being a homemaker...I am very **happy** at home; I don't need a lot of people around me. I am quite happy with my own things that I do....*

*I **still** don't **fully** feel local, **sometimes** I do, it depends **where** I am, in which **group** I'm in. I think I'm **accepted as a local**.... This is **my home** and I have made it my home and that is it.*

2.5 Clair (b 1953)

*...there is a time in your life when you are ready to get married. I think you get to an age when you think yep this is fine, I could do this now and it has coincided with a time, certainly in **my age group**, with when we were doing our Country Service. I don't think there is any great romantic connection with the country, I truly don't. But then again I don't think that these women, because they are reasonably well educated, these women they do perhaps realise the value of the open spaces. They do realise the value of the life they will lead out there and also I think they quite like being part of the deal. You know part of it; they want to be a part of the whole thing rather than just the partner of.*

*But when you have been an **import** into the district you don't fit into a slot. And they [the locals] find it quite hard too, because really and **truly** the only girls that the local boys would have married that were imports were either **nurses** to the Southview Hospital or teachers, of one sort or another. Otherwise they married local girls.... There were no other industries that brought girls into the district. **They left** more than came in and that was certainly expected of them, to leave and go and do their job. The boys weren't expected to leave, the boys were expected to stay here ad infinitum.*

Clair is 45 years old and has lived in the Hurstfield/Aradale community for 24 of those years. She first arrived to teach at Aradale Primary School and within three years married Geoff, a Hurstfield farmer. Geoff bought the farm (with his father's assistance) a fortnight before their wedding, and while ownership is in his name only, together they make decisions on how it is run. Clair and Geoff have three teenagers, Philip, Angela and Nigel. Their eldest, Philip, attends a South Island university during the academic year, while the younger two, Angela and Nigel, are at boarding school in the city and home for weekends and holidays. For the last two years Clair has returned full-time teaching at Aradale Primary School. She identifies herself as a European.

Clair had a predominantly urban-based existence when she was growing up with her parents and two younger sisters. She comments:

I was born in [South Island major city] and brought up in [that city], attended [a private girls school] from primer one to form seven and left there and went straight to teachers college for three years.

She reflects, "My parents gave me a wonderful education and I know that that has made me, moulded me, into the person that I am." Nevertheless, as a child her lifestyle was not totally urban. Clair rode horses that belonged to her neighbour, Judith, who was nine years older. But as the city developed their horse paddock was sold. Judith's parents then bought a farm, on the outskirts of the city, where Clair spent most weekends riding the horses because Judith had left school. She says, "They were like play farmers, Uncle Henry had built himself a shearing shed that had one stand in it where they sheared 25 sheep and this was a man who was supposed to have retired." Clair also had an aunt and uncle who farmed in the country.

When Clair left school there was only one thing that she wanted to do. She states, "My father had inherited a business; he is the third generation to run his business." But in the early 1970s he did not think this business was appropriate for Clair to pursue as a career option. She reminisces:

Odd as it may seem I guess because I was the eldest and I have no brothers and I actually wanted to join his company when I left school. That is what I wanted to do. But you see he was of the era that daughters didn't do that, they went away and became a nurse and they were fine but this daughter... became a teacher and that was quite acceptable.

The female role model of the household, Clair's mother, trained as a nurse and was a theatre sister at the time she married Clair's father and gave up paid employment.

During her teacher training Clair says, "The only sections I had were in town." They were "varied and different because when I think about it I was really brought up in a really pampered sort of a world." After gaining her diploma at teachers college, and almost

completing a degree, the Education Board sent Clair to her first teaching position. It was in a wealthy suburb, in her home city and lasted a year. She states:

*And then after that "heaven forbid" I was sent to Aradale and **no idea** where that could possibly be. Never, it never ever occurred to me that it could be "out in the sticks".... I remember driving into Aradale and it was like coming to a **western town** because it had the two pubs on either side!*

That was middle of the 1970s when all the appointments were for one year. Clair says, "And then I began the saga of moving around all the country schools in Southview...they appointed me to a lot of long-term relieving jobs."

However, on her arrival in Aradale Clair was expected to live in the teachers' hostel, a four-bedroom house that the Ministry of Education had specifically purchased. She lived there briefly but there was an influx of three new teachers that year. Clair says, "There were already two in the hostel and it was honestly, it felt like you were walking into somebody's home because the[y]...had been there for **years**." So Clair and the other new teachers went flatting together within the first few weeks of their arrival. She says, "We had a marvellous time...we used to rent out cottages, we had two or three around the district." Clair reinforces that their flat was an important place socially, because all the males were still living at home with their parents. She says:

*... all the boys were at home with their Mums and Dads. They'd **gone back onto** the farm and see they were still at home with Mum and Dad and so they wanted **out**. And this place [flat] was suddenly there and it was, it was very important to them. And that flat kept going for three years....*

The flatmates changed from the original three but the flat still served the same social purpose. Admittedly, Clair says, "Where one went the gang went really. And as I say the flat sort of became the place where they met. And so they all became our friends and then they got **girlfriends**." Clair and her flatmates would give the "boys...the once over with their girls." However, she also recalls, "A lot of the mothers around here thought it was the den of iniquity!" She defends that remark by saying that she only had one boyfriend, Geoff, during those three years. Her flatmates were similar; Michelle had a couple of boyfriends, while Jan went out with no one locally as her boyfriend lived elsewhere.

An important way of getting to know people locally was through Young Farmers, as Clair found out. She says, "We did a lot of hilarious things with Young Farmers." Yet, Clair will not forget the first Young Farmers' meeting she went to "**for as long as I live**":

*Jan [Janetta] and Michelle **conned** me into going because I said, "There is no way in **hell** that I was going to any meeting like that!" And I remember Janetta saying, "**Right** we have got a meeting to go to tonight." And I said, "Yeah right like I am going to any Young Farmers' meeting." And she said, "No, no it has got nothing to do with that, just you come, I tell you it is going to be very interesting." We got there and I remember sitting down and*

thinking I was there and rather than make a fool of myself and get up and walk out that [I would stay]. Then Grant Morris got up and I will never forget as long as I live. He said, "Well I suppose you girls want to become members?" And I am going, "No I don't." And he said, "So I propose that these three young girls become members of Young Farmers." And I went, "Oh my God," and I was a member before I even knew it. And he said, "Of course that is right, that is fine that will be just fine...." It was a great way to meet all the young people in the district because most of them belonged to it and not only our district but then it sort of spread through [the province] because [the provincial] Young Farmers' had lots of competitions and dances.

It was these friends from Young Farmers that became Clair's support network and with whom she socialised. She recounts the days of cabarets when everyone aimed to get drunk, *"We all drove our cars...it is amazing that a lot more of us weren't killed really."* Her closest friends were her initial flatmates, Jan who taught at Aradale and Michelle who taught at Hurstfield. They now live elsewhere but Clair still keeps in contact with them.

As a new teacher Clair felt highly visible in this small community. She says, *"You felt like you were sort of in a glass ball and everyone was looking in on you and they were."* She uses a story about playing golf to illustrate the fact: some students saw her out playing golf with her female flatmates and some male friends, and the children assumed one male was her boyfriend. It initially bothered Clair that she was the centre of such talk but now she realises, *"If they are talking about me then they are not talking about some other poor beggar."* She was very aware of the expectations to play a particular role as the new teacher on her arrival and laughs, *"I don't think that I played it terribly well!"* Life as a rural primary schoolteacher was in stark contrast to her urban experience.

Clair comments, *"It is a very closed society down here, it's everybody knows everybody...a close knit group."* But she does not mean this in a negative sense. She thought the children at Hurstfield Primary School learned to respect older people and younger children and play with all ages, whereas this was not the case in the larger schools. Clair found the town children cheekier and bolder and was struck by the boys in the country wanting to be farmers:

I can remember several of them saying to me, "I don't need to learn that, I'm going to be a farmer!" And it used to frustrate me terribly that children at five and six could think that and that hasn't changed...20 years later they are still saying that. I think it is frightening especially when one realises how well educated a child has to be to be a farmer.

Yet having said that, Clair believes that country children are worldlier in the 1990s. She uses the example of going to the city being not such a big deal as it used to be 20 years ago when children took the whole day off school for a major excursion. Now going to the city is a common event, with some rural residents commuting daily.

Clair describes the reason she stayed in Hurstfield as simple: "*I met this **man**, the love of my life, and he happened to live here.*" She remembers what it was like in the mid 1970s for her and Geoff living in the Hurstfield community before they were married:

*Well I think probably we were the first two people to openly live together and I think they [the community] were just **hugely relieved** when we decided we were going to get married. They were really hilarious because when we were flatting...well Geoff didn't live there but he might as well have. I mean Eugene [his father] used to ring us up...I said to him one night, "Don't you ever talk to him [Geoff] before he leaves the farm?" And he said, "The bugger's gone before I get a chance!"*

They did get married, and that was two and a half years after Clair arrived in Aradale. She remembers it was a conscious decision to marry someone not from the city and be involved in what they were doing. Clair says, "*I **wanted** to be part of the **business**; I wanted to be part of the decision making and the day-to-day running of it.*" When she married Geoff, Clair took on his family name.

Clair continued to teach for about nine or ten months after getting married, and she stopped when she was pregnant. She says, "*That is what you did in those days, you got pregnant and gave up your job and had your babies.*" Clair describes with great passion what it is like to become a mother:

*You have these **wondrous just miracle creatures** that you just can't believe ...but what they do to your life is totally **incredible**. And the force they have on you is, well you can't stop it. There is nothing you can do that will alter it. The power they have over you is total, simply because they are your children...you just set out to make their life as good and as full and as satisfying for them as you can.*

And the fact that Clair had these three children meant, "*I had finally conformed to them [the locals] what they...expected.*" Yet she also missed other adult conversation, some days seeing only her husband. Clair reflects:

*I know that is **why** I got on those committees. It was one way of getting out and following adult conversation and not **pathetic** adult conversation like sitting at Playcentre and talk to those dizzy women who...**drove me nuts**. It drove me nuts, I hated that.*

Clair returned to paid work in the middle of the 1980s during the rural downturn and when the children were older. She purposely did not return to teaching, "*Primarily because I had children here, at home, and I felt that the intensity of teaching as well as mothering would be too much children, children, children, children coming at you the whole time.*" She worked at a number of different positions in an Aradale hotel that caters for tourists and conferences before returning to relief teach in the early 1990s.

When Clair reentered the workforce she came off eight committees to do so. With so many rural women in paid employment the running of many community organisations has changed. She says that previously they would bake for stalls and now money is donated instead. Another reflection that Clair makes about women is:

*I think many countrywomen are better organised than town women are...because it is too far to go back and fix it up. So when you go out you make sure what you go out for you do and you do it properly. You can't go back and change things so I think you are probably better organised really. I think probably we are busier than town women are because 99 per cent of countrywomen are **very** involved with their husband's business. Well it is not their husband's business; it is **their joint business**. It is perceived as that, I don't know that the men always perceive it like that but the women certainly do.*

Clair's father is getting closer to retirement now and has some regrets that he did not let his daughter become involved in the business when she left school. She recalls that, "*He said, 'You could have run it.' I said, 'I know I could have run it but that is your problem not mine, it's a bit late now!'*" Both Clair's sisters live in the city and she keeps in regular contact with them, while visiting her parents fortnightly. The main attraction of the city for Clair is, "*The people, that is really the most important thing and they really are the reason why I go to [the city]...that is my family and my friends.*"

There are two communities that Clair feels she belongs to, the wider district including and beyond Hurstfield and Aradale where she knows a lot of people through teaching and her work at the hotel. The second community exists in the city she grew up in, where her family and friends still live. She remarks, "*Odd as it may seem never the twain shall meet.*" However, after 24 years of living in this community Clair is seen to have local status despite that she was "*not born or bred here.*" Proudly she states:

*In fact I was only called a local about three weeks, four weeks ago...the first time I have been called a local! ...I said to the fella, who did it, I said, "Well thank you, 24 years it has taken me and **finally** someone thinks I am a local." "**Course you are.**" "Well you are the first one that has ever called me such."*

Where Clair lives "*is a very caring community...they do look after people...people are genuinely concerned and want people to be happy and well looked after.*" She now realises what she initially thought was interfering is actually caring, like the golf story, but it took her almost five years to realise this. In Clair's opinion the only people she views "*as outsiders would be the tourists...because...they are just moving through.*" She says that people are the fabric of the community, "*without one the rest can't really carry on.*"

Clair also comments about the community in a more general way by saying:

*I think a country community is far more conservative. Change happens much more slowly down our way. **It does**, but that is because of the nature of the*

*industry that we are in. You can't change **radically** and so you **don't** change radically.*

The example Clair uses is that you cannot be a sheep and cropping farmer one day and a dairy farmer the next: *"It would take us a year to set it up."* While Geoff owns the farm on paper, Clair is adamant that it is run as a partnership. She says, *"I mean with the marital status laws it is 50/50 anyway, it's irrelevant. He likes having his name on it and that is fine."*

Clair is now more financially independent since she returned to full-time teaching at Aradale Primary School two years ago. It is a long term relieving position for two or three years. She describes, *"So that's an old lady that went back teaching. It's quite a learning curve but it is getting easier."* What strikes her now is that her new entrant pupils see her as old, a similar age to their grandmothers. But the worst thing for Clair is that she now has two pupils whose parents she taught. She says, *"A little girl came to school the other day and her mother said, 'See I told you there would be a teacher here who taught me!'"* Clair thinks that is very scary and sobering.

When asked what the most important thing to her is, Clair says, *"In my life, my husband and my children and my family."* Yet she also states, *"I don't identify myself with anything in particular I am just me!"* She finds it difficult to describe herself: *"Ooh that is hard. A mother, a wife and a teacher and I hope a good friend to a lot of people. Yeah that is about it really."* To summarise the influences that have shaped Clair's identity since being in Aradale/Hurstfield, she says:

*So I came as a teacher and then I became **the wife** of Geoff Hollis and that has had a huge impact on me simply because of everything that goes with being somebody's wife. There are expectations because you are somebody's wife and you are also trying to build a life yourself with your husband. You have ambitions and you have wants and so you sort of set off on that path to try and get there. And then the other thing that has certainly changed me is the fact that I am a mother also and that, probably of all the things, has had the greatest effect on my life.*

2.6 Barbara (b 1956)

...if I had had my choice I would have been a land-girl and I had two brothers and so Dad said, "No way was I being a land-girl." So I always wanted to be a teacher ever since I was "knee high to a grasshopper." So teaching was a way of getting back into a country area because if you had been a nurse you were a wee bit more restricted aren't you, because you could have come to Southview. But teaching was good, because it gave you a chance to get back to the country areas and that's where I wanted to go, back into the country.

*I feel as though I belong more in Aradale than I ever did at [rural place that grew up] but probably because I only had my primary schooling [there].... I honestly think that I probably feel more a part of Aradale than some of these people who spend all of their primary schooling here and then went away and have come back and everything has changed hasn't it? But we are making a **life for ourselves in this community** you know everything we do is based around where you get your groceries, you go to the Medical Centre, you do everything in this community so that is why we feel part of it.*

Barbara, who is 42 years old, originally came to Aradale for her first position as a primary schoolteacher 21 years ago. She has lived in the Aradale community for 18 years since marrying Fred, who has a mixed farm between Aradale and Hurstfield. Barbara farms in partnership with Fred on land previously owned by his parents. Barbara and Fred have three school aged children. Their two teenagers, Neville and Fiona, are at boarding school during the week and come home at weekends and holidays; while their younger son, George, goes to Aradale Primary School. Barbara has for the last three years been teaching part-time at Aradale. She identifies herself as a European.

Barbara originally "*came from a small country town*" where her parents had a mixed farm. This rural background was important to her and church was their main family outing. She recalls, "*When I was a kid I went to Sunday school every week; church had a very big bearing on my childhood.*" She says:

I was second to youngest of five children, two brothers and two sisters. I went to primary school at the local school and for my secondary schooling I went to [names a private girls' school in the city]....

Barbara remembers she found it hard going back home from school in the weekends. She says, "*It was never the same because apart from playing sport I didn't really do anything socially with the people [at my place of origin].*" Barbara's sister, five years her senior, made the decision to train as a teacher in her fifth or sixth form year. But Barbara states that

...ever since I can remember I wanted to be a teacher and yet my Mum wasn't a teacher [but] her Mum was a teacher.... I had already made up my mind when I was little what I was going to do and I didn't change my mind at all along the way.

Barbara remembers how much she loved the stars and stamps that her older siblings brought home in their books when she was younger. She adds that "*right through schooling I guess I was quite bossy in reading and that I used to always try and take control, it used to make me cross that kids were fooling around [when] I wanted to learn.*"

When Barbara was at boarding school she remembers going to visit her older sister who then taught in a rural school. Barbara recalls, "*We came **back through Aradale** and I thought oh this doesn't look like a bad little town to teach in.*" She reflects that her life has evolved around school, having gone to primary then secondary school, and straight on to

training college before going out teaching. Barbara recalls being called a snob at training college because she had been to boarding school. *"I spent my three years sticking up for myself trying to tell them that we were just like everybody else!"* She private boarded for the first two years and flatbed with other women the third year. After securing her first job at Aradale Barbara remembers:

...all the lecturers said to me, "Oh you will marry a farmer there!" And I said, "No way." Oh I laugh when I look back because they said, "You'll never get away from Aradale." I did get away but I wasn't ready to settle down at that stage but there were plenty who were and that was what frightened me most.

Barbara started her teaching career with a one-year placement in Aradale in the middle of the 1970s. When Barbara first arrived in Aradale she lived at the teachers' hostel for two or three weeks before going flatting with two other primary schoolteachers, Michelle and Clair. Aradale was far enough away from her family, yet close enough to visit them. Barbara also says, *"I wanted to live in an area that wasn't too small and had a bit of community life."* Aradale definitely provided that for her:

*Yes the [cultural organisation] and the church. Oh the [names a summer sport], I played [that sport] for Hurstfield...[and then] **Young Farmers** was the main thing because **every** weekend it was such a big group of them, you know all around the same age as me. You know there was always something on that we went to or we went to the pub, ...they **became** your informal friends though; yes it was **the formal group** that started it but they became the ones that you mix with all the time.*

She was impressed about how easy it was to go out and meet the locals because there were so many clubs in Aradale to join. Barbara says, *"I felt local even after my first year teaching! I didn't feel like an outsider but I know others that have felt differently and still do."* Joining the cultural organisation meant *"mixing with a different age group...so I got to know some older ones and I did go to church, which was another way of meeting a different lot of people again."* Barbara recalls, *"As a single teacher...the people I was mainly mixing with were young like me, unmarried."*

Barbara says, *"That first year was great, I just loved it. So I was sorry to leave Aradale, but they were all one-year appointments so my next year was up in [provincial North Island]."* This was an even smaller rural school with only two teachers compared to the seven-teacher school at Aradale. However, Barbara recalls that she was not lonely because *"one of the girls I went to training college with, she was also up in [the same district]."* For her third year of teaching she returned to the South Island to a three teacher rural school, therefore having no urban teaching experience. Barbara thinks that people *"are standoffish [because] you are a teacher...they are not as relaxed with you I'm sure of that."* Yet she says, *"You get a bit of respect being a schoolteacher teaching kids."* Barbara also comments about the importance of professionalism in the teacher/parent relationship. She talks about being:

...on your guard [so] that you don't get drawn into something about someone else's kid and parents are quite shrewd like that, they will say something and wait for you to add to it.

During her year in Aradale Barbara met Fred but they were just friends at the time. However, they corresponded when she moved north and in the late 1970s they became a lot closer when his family circumstances changed. When Barbara returned to the South Island she says, "*I came up to see him a lot, commuted a lot back and [forward] and then in 1980 we got married.*" When they married Barbara says, "*My **name changed from Barker to Marsden.***" She was 23 and thought that was young to be married. Because she had previously taught only for one year in Aradale, three years earlier, Barbara comments that she was seen by others then as "*a farmer's wife*" rather than a teacher.

For those first two years of marriage she relief taught because she enjoyed helping Fred on the farm. She states, "*But once you are **married** then of course there is the stability thing too.*" Barbara adds, "*I think a relationship, **a husband and wife**, is perhaps easier than going it alone in a country community.*" This is in contrast to the life led by single people in the country, which can be lonely. They both support each other but Fred is based primarily on the farm. Barbara says, "*He was on the A & P committee [so] that was busy around show time.*" She has also been involved in organising children's activities at the A & P Show in recent years.

While Barbara says that her family is the most important thing in her life, she recalls the early years of motherhood as being lonely and hard:

*...the hardest years [were] when the kids were little and you were not in contact with a lot of people. You know they were perhaps the loneliest years.... And then once the kids...started **Playcentre** that helped because then you were meeting a lot more [people] and then you got talking about things, but up until we went to Playcentre it was lonely I must admit.... **I hated Plunket.** It just made you feel **inadequate**; yeah it is funny how I felt about it.*

Despite the initial isolation of raising the children Barbara talks about how motherhood "*opens new doors*" to meeting people. Now that the children are older she finds the friends they keep in contact with have similar aged children. However, Barbara adds:

*...we have even taught the kids that you don't talk about personal things with other people, and you keep that within family. **And I guess that was the way that I was brought up too.***

Being self-sufficient within the family is important to Barbara in Aradale. She does not consider the family very social, particularly after her first year there, but that is by choice because there are opportunities available.

Barbara stopped relief teaching when her eldest child was born and returned when her youngest started school about five years later. With their older children being at boarding school Barbara states:

*But you must remember Fred and I both went away to boarding school and we both **loved** boarding school and we wanted our kids to have that opportunity because it opens some new doors, it's the **people you meet** and the **contacts you make** that makes all the difference.*

Her home is very important to Barbara, especially at weekends with all the family. She says, *"I love being at home...being together as a family. I love it when the kids come home and we are all together as a family, we don't have to go anywhere just being together that is enough for me."* It is usually busy when the children are all home because they still play their respective sports, and as a family they like to watch sport on television too.

Life is more social now Barbara is back teaching compared to when she was at home with the children. She admits that her experiences as a mother are useful professionally, *"I think now that I have been a mother I am a far better teacher. I am a **far more understanding** teacher whereas before I couldn't relate to the parents."* For the last three years Barbara has been back teaching part-time. Originally a 0.6 position, it is now a 0.7 position, which means that she teaches each morning. Her daily routine as a teacher starts off by being at school for 8:15 am and sometimes involves waiting until the end of the school day for meetings. Barbara feels she does not have the same amount of authority as *"other teachers who have got **full-time permanent jobs**."* She hopes to have her own class full-time again one day, but at present enjoys having time to devote to the farm and family.

Barbara feels a sense of pride having her own money again and enjoys her financial independence. She says the off farm earnings have increased her self-esteem. She loves being back teaching and states, *"I never wanted to be rich but it is nice to be able to buy the things you need."* Having all the modern conveniences and flashiest cars is not important to Barbara; she simply wants enough money so that if a major appliance goes wrong it can be replaced. She says they have a comfortable lifestyle, *"Like [enough] money that if you had to have an operation, you could afford to do it."*

Barbara appreciates her rural lifestyle, which is in contrast to her dislike of the city from boarding school days, *"it was just a rat race to me."* In Aradale she loves the fresh air, mountains and pace of life compared with the city smog:

*You can get out there and you can relax and switch off and there is something about working with animals they can be frustrating but it is **rewarding too**. It is the same sort of feeling I get with the kids, when you get a ewe to take a lamb; it is those little things in life that bring you so much **pleasure**. It is like a vegetable garden and that being able to pick your own*

carrots. I love those simple pleasures of life; those are the things that I enjoy the most...there is nothing that beats having your own meat supply and then meat from the farm just tastes so much nicer than meat that you buy from the shop.

Barbara has taught Sunday school and coached sport but now her weekends are increasingly busy with the children coming home. She says, *"I have tried to stick to my strengths and offer my services in those areas and keep away from the others!"* Barbara ceased teaching at church, and comments that she did not want to teach during the week and then at weekends because it was not good for the children to have the same teacher six days a week. She does enjoy *"church but it is fitting it in"* at the moment because the family are Barbara's priority.

Barbara comments on the number of rural women who return to paid employment nowadays: *"I think there is more pressure for countrywomen to go back to work...than there was but I am sure there are a lot of town women that do jobs just to make ends meet."* She also reflects on the clothing that countrywomen wear:

... we are much more "low key" but no you can't always say that either, everybody is different aren't they. Most of us are more conservative with our dressing and that. I don't think we worry about the fashion like the urban women do. ...I might be wrong here but countrywomen don't seem to place such an emphasis on social things. ...I don't think there is a typical countrywoman, there are people that would surprise you if they said they were country[women]. You know there are some very intelligent women out in the country as well as there are in town. And some very well educated women too and so I don't think there is any one category that fits a countrywoman or an urban [woman].

Barbara is, however, attracted to the city to further the children's education; to take them to attractions; and for musical shows if she has a traveling companion as Fred is not interested. She does her grocery shopping in Southview or Aradale. She has one sister who lives in a city but the rest of her family still live in rural areas and she keeps in contact with them all. Barbara speaks about her reality as a rural dweller:

I know that [life] is pressured but it is a different sort of pressure...it is probably the pressures to survive...and those sorts of pressures I can handle better than living in town. You know being invited to the right parties; wearing the right thing; you know keeping up with "the Jones", yeah I like being me...I like being myself; I don't like being something that I am not.

To summarise how Barbara views her identity, it has shifted from being primarily a teacher to encompass her role as a wife and mother, and she says, *"Family would be the most important."* Yet, as life also evolves, and depending on the time of year, the farm and her teaching commitments are increasingly important. Barbara states:

I think probably because you are a teacher that is, I'm sure people don't think of me as a farmer's wife, it is all teaching now I am sure of that.... Whereas before I went back to teaching you would meet people, and they would be

more farming orientated but it has changed now because they know that I teach and it used to revolve around your kids.

...family would be number one and I try to juggle the farming and the teaching and because I still love getting out, shifting breaks, I love the lambing time.... Family is definitely first and then the farming and school are probably pretty close together. Yeah, don't tell...anyone else that, I'm sure they would sack me!

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the life histories of four women, Grace, Louise, Clair, and Barbara. The ontological narratives of these women are embedded in a specific time in which social relations between the genders have become more equal. The women were born in either the 1940s or 1950s and have lived through the subsequent decades, with the interviews undertaken in the late 1990s. Three women have urban backgrounds, while Barbara was brought up on a farm until she went to boarding school as a teenager. Each woman's life story was set in the South Island of New Zealand, with only Barbara living a year in the North Island. Aradale or Hurstfield was the first rural school in which the women were placed as part of their Country Service. Now they all reside permanently in Aradale or Hurstfield.

Some narratives were similar and shared between all four women. These included teaching in urban schools for the probationary assistant's year, being a visible young teacher in the rural community, marrying a local farmer, leaving the workforce while raising two or three children, returning to teach years later when the children were older, participating in community activities locally, and maintaining close links with their family of origin who lived elsewhere. In contrast, other narratives were more diverse, for example, the only accommodation option for the "50 something" women was boarding in the 1960s, compared to the "40 something" women who flatted in the 1970s with other female teachers, after a few weeks in the teachers' hostel.

I have called these women the same generation despite the "50 something" women being born during World War II when women were working more fully in the economy while the men were defending their country. Within the next 15 years, the "40 something" women, known as the post-war baby boomers, were born into the welfare state during a wave of prosperity. The public narrative of coming to a rural area to fulfill Country Service teaching requirements is unique to this generation because the scheme ended in 1982. But what similarities and/or differences exist for younger women teachers? Are the stories of the "30 something" women any different from the stories of this generation, simply because they are embedded in the later decades of the twentieth century? The next chapter introduces the

four "30 something" women and their life histories. In Chapters Four and Five I will draw out the themes and continuities between these generations, while also identifying the stories specific to each generation of women, relational to their historical/temporal and social positioning. My analysis focuses on both generations of women through the ontological narratives they tell about their identities and reflections on community life.

The setting of these women's life histories in their social, economic and political context seems to identify a number of common themes, which are explored in Chapters Four and Five. These themes are an important element in the women's shaping and perceptions of their various identities. From this chapter the identities that emerged from the life histories can be defined as teacher, wife, mother, and community member. One woman also identifies as a farmer. The individual, yet shifting, identities of teacher, wife, mother and farmer are explored in Chapter Four. Multiple stories were told about community life, and these ontological and public narratives of being a community member are explored in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER THREE

THE LIFE HISTORIES OF THE "30 SOMETHING" GENERATION

Memory is a selection of images, each image is like a thread, each thread is woven together to tell a story and each story is our past. (A final word by Eve in the movie *Eve's Bayou*, The Academy, Christchurch, 5 October 1998).

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the women who were all born in the 1960s are introduced chronologically, by their year of birth. The life histories for Sally, Margaret, Emma, and Sue are based on at least one interview undertaken with each of the four women. Sue was interviewed for the first time in 1998. The other women, Sally, Emma, and Margaret, were all interviewed in 1997, when this project began for an Honours paper. Excerpts from both years' interviews have been included in these life histories. A fuller background discussion of the writing of these life histories and the respective themes that have emerged is given in Section 2.2 "The Life History Introductions." An important feature of the "30 something" generation is that they were born during the 1960s, a more liberal decade than the 1940s or 1950s. The social, economic, and political context is introduced as the setting for these women's lives (Section 3.2). The stories people tell are embedded in the social relations of that historical period. Thorns and Sedgwick (1997:193) state:

The shifts in contemporary social theory and research to privileging individual narratives, sometimes divorced from an analysis of the context in which they have been produced, has led some to deny the importance of history.

Rather than deny the importance of history, I allude to some connections in this section between the historical context and the women's lives, but it is my intention to let the women tell their own stories for the bulk of this chapter. However, out of their stories themes emerged, and these themes and their placement in their historical setting are discussed in Chapters Four and Five. At that stage Somers' use of conceptual narrativity, which encompasses narrative identities and relational settings (examined over time and space) become invaluable in my analysis. For now the respective life histories are introduced in Section 3.3, Sally (b 1963); Section 3.4, Margaret (b 1966); Section 3.5, Emma (b 1966); and Section 3.6, Sue (b 1967).

3.2 Setting the Context

As outlined briefly in Section 2.2, the social changes since the 1960s have been dramatic for New Zealand women, both rural and urban. The social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, especially the second wave of feminism and the Women's Liberation movement, had a great impact on the education system. The women initiating change were children of the post-war baby boom who attended school during the years of liberal policies of equal opportunity (Middleton 1990:82). Now these educated women were demanding equal access for women and girls across the curriculum and in non-traditional occupations (Middleton 1990:83). Yet these progressive moves were countered by parental and peer attitudes, and the mass media which portrayed women and girls as "ideally passive, economically dependent on men and judged by appearance rather than intellect" (Novitz 1989:62). The formative years for the "30 something" women's lives were in this era. Women also began pushing the boundaries outside of the education sector.

In the 1960s feminists rejected the double standard of "the sexual revolution" that gave men more freedom (Macdonald 1993:161). They also demanded women's "right to control fertility and the right for twenty-four hour child care" (Macdonald 1993:161). The introduction of the contraceptive pill in New Zealand in 1962 was the start of changes that gave women more control over their bodies. But with the pill came ethical debates about whether doctors should prescribe to single women (Smith 1991:90). By the time the women interviewed had matured into teenagers and young adults, during the 1970s and 1980s, issues of the 1960s like contraception and childcare were largely resolved and an accepted part of life even in rural areas.

The debate over titles for women was another issue that arose out of the Women's Liberation movement. For the first time women questioned the distinction between Mrs and Miss, and the Ms honorific was introduced to end the double standard of women being identified by their marital status (Macdonald 1993:161). For a detailed overview of the Women's Liberation movement, including discussions of radical, liberal, lesbian and socialist feminisms, refer to Dann (1985).

Authoritarian parental attitudes came under much attack in the 1970s when all the "30 something" generation were growing up and still living at home. They were children in the 1960s and 1970s, teenagers in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and at training college and university during the late 1980s and 1990s. Over the last three decades of the twentieth century living arrangements became more relaxed: in the 1960s' "permissive society" mixed flatting by university students was tolerated (Macdonald 1993:143), but by the time those born in the 1960s had left home it was more the norm. De facto relationships, instead of

marriage, were becoming more acceptable with a 46.1 per cent increase between 1991 and 1996 of people living together (Statistics New Zealand 1999a). As a result, "In 1994 New Zealand reached a 30-year low in terms of the number of people getting married" (Sanders 1996:43). Yet the traditions of marriage have survived because a proportion of the population still believe in the values of marriage and that is their preferred environment for raising children.

This generation was growing up in a welfare state that was declining; public provisions were no longer supplied to the population as of right. The Labour government continued its wide sweeping reforms between 1984 and 1990 (as outlined in Section 2.2) which led to increasing unemployment and changes to the social welfare system. Social security for this generation was becoming harder to access than their parents had experienced in the previous decades. The "I generation" was emerging as a result of increasingly individualistic social relations that arose out of 1970s identity politics. The "30 something" generation has been brought up in a more market driven economy where "user pays" was becoming common in everyday life and people were expected to be saving for their retirement rather than waiting for the state to provide in their old age. The "more libertarian system of government based on rights rather than state provisions" (Thorns and Sedgwick 1997:192) continued after 1990 with the election of the National government that stayed in power until 1999. The 1970s had been an important decade for equal pay legislation; for example, the Equal Pay Act of 1972 had provision for equal pay to occur in five steps before 1978 (Aitken 1980:84). However, within two decades the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act in 1991 weakened the trade unions (Thorns and Sedgwick 1997:98). These changes exaggerated old inequalities for some members of society despite creating new opportunities for others.

Some women of this generation stated clearly that they trained as teachers because they were paid to do so. Once out in the workforce one way that positions were available in rural schools was through Taskforce Green, the job scheme designed to enhance the environment (Munro 1991:2). The 1988 *Tomorrow's Schools* reforms of primary, intermediate and secondary schools (Middleton and May 1997:286) had an impact on rural communities, families, teachers and principals. Refer to articles in *The New Zealand Farmer*, "Keeping Up With Changes" (1990) and "Tomorrows Schools Burden Principals" (1990) for further discussion. The context that this generation's lives were set in, as school students, teacher trainees, university students, and teachers, is discussed by Middleton and May (1997:279-342) in their chapter entitled "Revolution and Reactions." In 1966, for every three men at university there was only one woman, but the subordinate position of women students was about to change (Sutch 1993:149). University education was now more

accessible to women of this generation than to those before them (Middleton and May 1997:208).

In the 1990s many clubs and organisations existed in rural communities (as described in Section 1.5), including a mixture of sporting clubs. However, rural people were now travelling further for their social and leisure pursuits. Rural women in the 1990s found the city more accessible than ever before because of improved roads and cheaper cars. Previously isolated rural women could not only socialise independently of their husbands in the country (Smith 1991:219); they could go to the city for entertainment, social life and shopping. Town and country were coming closer together.

Over the lifetime of these "30 something" women New Zealand has become increasingly urbanised with a drift north of population, particularly to the Auckland region. Thorns and Sedgwick (1997:193) state, "This reflects the fact that our traditional base of wealth generation in agriculture, pastoral and related industries is being complemented by new activities such as tourism, information and financial services, and leisure and recreational activities." By the time the women interviewed arrived in Aradale it was functioning as a dual economy based around farming and tourism (see Section 1.5 for a full description). The women arrived after the rural downturn, although the impact had reshaped the lives of rural people. In the 1990s it was more acceptable for rural women to combine paid employment with being a "farmer's wife." Nicholas Taylor and Heather McCrostie Little (1997) outline the reality and acceptance of off farm employment which has been the norm for the "30 something" generation of women and their older counterparts.

The women's life histories are set in this social, economic and political context. Sally, Margaret, Emma, and Sue were all children of the liberal 1960s, a generation which was greatly influenced by a freeing of societal attitudes. Throughout their "30 something" years the women have grown up in an increasingly market driven economy where personal responsibility is to the fore, this was in direct contrast to their parents' generation who prospered in the welfare state.

3.3 Sally (b 1963)

...rural communities have had a lot of little schools around ... and as I say this is the third Collinswood to marry a local teacher. Dave's grandfather married his wife that was teaching at [Hurstfield] and Dave's mother was a teacher at [another school in the district] when Graham met her, so teaching is the thing.

*Well in years past, I mean, women were required to do Rural Service weren't they? And I think that is how they started out basically, you were required to do your Rural Service and I mean for farmers, as well, it is a **great catch** you know. As Dave said I was "**the best paddock on the farm**" during my time when I was working. I think I said to you at the time of the last interview that the farm advisor told Dave before we were **married**, "Why don't you find a teacher or a retired judge's daughter?" And he got both!*

Sally, aged 35 years, has lived in this rural community for seven years, with the first year based in the Aradale township. She has been married to Dave, a Hurstfield farmer, for six of those seven years. They have two preschool children, Liz and Andy, who are the fifth generation to be living on the family farm which Sally and Dave now own in a 50/50 partnership. Sally identified herself as a New Zealander, when asked what ethnic group she belonged to; others might describe her as a Pakeha or of European descent.

Having been born, brought up and schooled in a large South Island city where Sally lived with her parents, three other sisters, and two brothers, she described her urban based background:

*As a daygirl at a boarding school I would love going to visit friends' farms and I spent the majority of my holidays trying to worm my way into going to stay on someone's farm, having time at the farm. And so I really **loved it**, I really loved it. So for me it wasn't a huge decision to move into a rural community.... I had had some connections through schooling with friends who came from farms and I knew I enjoyed that lifestyle.*

Her family shifted to another South Island city in her seventh form year; Sally was ready for the change although she did not initially realise it at the time, and she enjoyed the challenges of a new school. After that, Sally went off to teachers' college and university where she got her teaching qualifications and a degree. Sally's family had expected her to follow in her father's footsteps as a lawyer, but Sally chose to train as a teacher because she knew you got paid to train. During this time Sally met her prospective husband who was flatting with friends and they started going out together, about 1987-1988. They later corresponded when she went overseas; their relationship continued when Sally got work back in the city of her training until a job came up at Hurstfield Primary School. At that time Dave took her to the interview, which was late in the day, and then sat in the car waiting for her to finish. Some humorous comments were made about his presence before the interview started and Sally recalls that she was offered the job the same evening. The only problem was that she could not be contacted immediately as she and Dave were at the local pub: not a good first image, she thought.

On Sally's arrival in the community, early in 1991, she flatbed with another teacher in the township of Aradale for a year. The other newcomers, and more particularly young women teachers from those days, became her friends and the start of her support network. Of key

significance in making the transition into living in this small community was Sally's involvement in more than one sport, first as a player and then at an administrative level, as vice-president of a club. She recalls how fortunate it was that she got pregnant before having to become president. Yet continual contact with friends and her own family members back in the city (and elsewhere in the country) were important for Sally establishing herself in this newfound rural lifestyle.

Being a teacher in a rural school, Sally felt extra pressure *"to be a role model."* She experienced a public life in a way she had not found in the city:

I suppose it's like being the local cop, there is a fine line, you've got to be professional because some of these parents I would see socially.... You've got young children in your care in the classroom and it carries on outside the classroom. We would always say at [school] when it came to drinking and driving it was like your name in the paper was the worst thing and the parents knowing.... And that wouldn't be a good thing for a local teacher to have offences, I mean that is the extreme but I think you do still need to be a role model.

She also came across an attitude that teachers were the most "knowing" in the community. Sally recalls playing Pictionary and other friends wanted to be on her team because, *"She is the teacher, as if the teacher knows everything or you are seen as the one who would know."* It was at times like this that Sally's friends outside Aradale became even more important.

Teaching at a two teacher rural school, Sally thought the parents *"were very welcoming,"* yet keeping her own family name after her marrying Dave meant she met some resistance from them. Some of the parents would write notes to Mrs Collinswood and Sally says, *"That was their way of saying that look you have married a Collinswood, so be a Collinswood, and so I remained Frenchington!"* This issue of naming was an important one for Sally; she felt strongly about keeping her own identity. It was not until she and Dave were buying the farm from his parents that Sally seriously considered changing her name to Collinswood, which in fact she did. Sally expressed a *"sense of losing a little bit of yourself and your own identity and your own background which is still important to you"* by changing to her married name. But she has maintained her own family name on her Visa card, and her sisters still address mail to Sally Frenchington.

After only a year in the community, marriage itself was not a big change for Sally, although she did feel more of a *"sense of permanency that comes from marrying someone in the area and to a certain degree that sense of belonging."* She was now connected to the family name of Collinswood and appreciated the support of her extended family, particularly Dave's sister and his parents. This connection, while being important to Sally, also

contributed to the ambivalence she experienced re maintaining her own name and identity. With marriage came pressure from her father-in-law, Graham, to give up teaching and become a mother; it was almost as though this "*career business*" of teaching was not a serious option for a married woman in the rural community. Sally made other choices, like going up north to stay with family over the busiest time of the farming year, which were also unacceptable to Graham. She is now a lot more relaxed about expectations that family and other people place on her.

After two years of teaching at Hurstfield and "*being the local cop*," Sally got work as Assistant Principal at a larger school in Southview. She enjoyed the career move:

*... there has still got to be a bit of a **line** between you and the parents. And that is hard when you are meeting people socially. Or they are actually friends as well and having to teach their children so in a way that was an advantage going into Southview and just being able to be **me** when I am here [at Hurstfield] and the teacher when I am in Southview.*

This new job "*for a couple of years took the pressure off*" the expectation that Sally, as a married woman, would now have children. When she got pregnant with Liz, Sally took maternity leave for one year before resigning from her job. Motherhood was a more significant change than marriage for Sally because she did not only give up teaching full-time:

I still really grieved for the loss of that job and the loss of that identity. That was a big thing and you couldn't think I'm a Mum but I'm also an Assistant Principal on maternity leave, while I just became the mother. And so for me that was a big thing that loss of identity, that loss of independence, someone who had been earning in your own right, although I was getting great enjoyment from being with Liz....

Now, rather than life being focused on her school community, Sally was contributing to Aradale community life in a very different way by meeting other local parents at playgroup and when she went to the shops. She says, "*I think [you feel] that sense of belonging in that: you have brought a child or children into the area and that they become part of the community straight away.*"

Sally does not identify as a local although she defines her two children as locals by the very fact of their of being born there. In contrast, she still has strong connections to her family of origin in the city, but believes she benefits from having access to both rural and urban lifestyles and moving freely between the two. She feels like a member of four communities: the school community in Southview; the immediate Hurstfield community; the wider Aradale community; and the city where her parents are based. At a later stage Sally also adds "*that we belong to another community through the church.*"

Sally had been back relief teaching since the birth of her first child two years earlier and is looking forward to doing more teaching when she has finished breast feeding her second child. However, she considers childcare an issue; previously they employed a nanny to look after Liz when Sally had a block of teaching so that Dave could still see his daughter during the day. At this stage Sally has not yet used the local crèche facilities, although Liz seemed to be excited by the surroundings on a visit there one day. Sally enjoys the professional part of having her own career and off farm employment. She is now, with a friend, co-authoring teachers' resource books for publication, something that gives her a challenge away from mothering and keeps Sally in touch with the teaching profession and education more generally.

Sally and Dave have tended to make friends with other newcomers in the area:

*...our friends now are all newcomers to the area when I think about it. I mean we **know** a lot of people...but the couples that we do most of our socialising with are newcomers, newcomers to the area.*

The fact that her husband went away to boarding school, Sally thinks, had an influence on the friends he knew locally, and she commented that those who have always lived in Aradale have their own established networks: *"they are comfortable in their own friendships."* So it was easier to meet and make friends with people who are also new to the area.

This lifestyle now sees Sally doing things that her family view as novel and with a certain amount of romanticism, like feeding the hens, driving the farm truck, and taking drinks out to Dave when he is working on the farm. For Sally, however, these tasks are part of her practical "day to day" life of living on a farm: there is nothing romantic about shifting sheep, knowing the weather cycles and patterns, or talking about how well things are growing in the paddock. This is purely what her life is like, and at times she feels that her family do not understand this lifestyle; she is the only family member who lives on a farm. Nevertheless, Sally's extended family do appreciate the open spaces, and enjoy the opportunity to relax and stay on the farm, leaving their "hectic" city lifestyles behind, even if it is often at the most "busy" time on the farm calendar. Sally explains:

...my youngest brother, he is the one who is [employed overseas], he just loves the open space and there are not a lot of people around and we have got a big house to be living in and can have a big garden too. But for him I think it is the sense of space. My sisters enjoy coming down for the break but couldn't see themselves in this sort of environment; it wouldn't be their "cup of tea". And friends say when they come down they feel like they have had a holiday and I guess it is just that they have had a break whereas I quite enjoy going to [the city] and just doing different things there.

It is important for Sally to have the contrast between farm life and the city where there are more services, greater entertainment opportunities and friends and family to visit. She also

acknowledges a difference in the schooling between rural and urban, "*with a more family atmosphere in a country school definitely, there is that sense of community and family.*"

Having a comfortable home is important to Sally, but she acknowledges a lot of memories are linked with the house and garden for members of Dave's extended family. She states:

*Having a home base is important, **probably for me** it is important to **still** be making **my own** touches on this home which was Dave's **parents' home** and Dave's **grandparents' home**. We are the third generation in this home. And so that is interesting making changes, especially with Dave's parents still being alive. ...I mean we were lucky we [have] got a lovely home, I know, but I didn't ever go looking for a place and think that yes this is the place I would like to call home.... We have to do things a lot more **slowly and quietly**, you know, "If you take out that fence you will get the easterly," [she says, impersonating someone telling Sally and her husband what to do!]*

Part of making this house a home for Sally is the renovations that they are undertaking. In order to pay for this work she appreciates having her own finances to draw on:

*...having a wee bit of **my own financial** independence as well and especially when we are making changes to the house; that I feel like I am contributing in some way to that from my earnings from the books and through teaching is important.*

Sally has kept her own personal account from when she was teaching full-time and she deposits drawings from the farm into it, rather than running an account from the farm directly. Having that independence and autonomy is important to Sally.

Family is the most important thing in Sally's life, first her immediate family and then her extended family. She identifies herself as many things: the teacher as seen by others in the community and as a mother and a wife, but definitely not a "local." She lives locally but was not born in Aradale, so that means she can never, nor does she want to be, considered a local. However, when the tourists come to town she feels "local" in that context. The writing part of her life is something very important to her, but it is quite private in that nobody locally really knows that she has co-authored six books. Overall Sally says, "*I see myself as me,*" and that comes through repeatedly. And to leave the final words to her:

*...first and foremost you see myself as **myself**, I am still very much Sally Frenchington [own family name] rather than Sally Collinswood, but then there is Dave's wife and mother of the children, and a farmer's wife I suppose to some extent. There is the wife and mother label but there is also the teacher.*

3.4 Margaret (b 1966)

The people who have stayed on in the community and like me have married locals tend to be much more settled. ...I started to think of people [women teachers] who had moved in to the community and hadn't married farmers and I struggled because everyone that I can think of had married a farmer!

I started off really being here as a teacher and now it has sort of changed to being as a mother because I am not doing as much teaching. People don't see me in the supermarket and want to discuss their child's behaviour or that sort of thing anymore, which I quite like actually. I never felt like I could go in and be anonymous and just sort of escape or talk to people about something else that I had been doing.

*I feel like I have been accepted into this community, I don't know I would say as a local. My father-in-law always says it takes ten years to be a local and I haven't been here for ten years yet! But I have never felt like I wasn't accepted...because [of] my relationship with Simon and like I say **his status** in the community I think makes a big difference....*

Margaret is aged 31 and has lived in the Aradale area for six and a half years, when she came to teach at the local secondary school. For three and a half of those years she has been married to Simon, a Hurstfield farmer, and they now live on the family farm which Simon owns almost a third of. The rest of the farm is in a family trust. Margaret and Simon also have a block of their own land. Their two preschool children, Paul and Mark, are the third generation of their family to live on the farm. Margaret identifies herself as a Pakeha New Zealander.

Life began for Margaret in a small community about an hour out of a North Island city. However, she says, "*I did live in a rural community, like for about the first six years of my life, but that is quite hard to remember.*" None of Margaret's relatives live in rural areas. She reflects that her background was different from her lifestyle now:

...when I was growing up, I/we shifted not as often as some people but certainly every three or four years we would shift to a new house in a new community and I had never really thought in terms of living somewhere for thirty years....

At about the age of seven Margaret's family shifted to the city and she comments, "*Basically I felt like a city girl.*" She was educated in that urban environment until her seventh form year. At that stage Margaret was accepted into teachers' college and so shifted to a major North Island city for four years of university study. Having gained two degrees she trained as a teacher for a further year in a major South Island city. She enjoyed her time in the South Island and was particularly impressed with the Southern Alps, the wide-open spaces, the weather and by the people. She recalls, "*There appeared to be fewer people and [they were] a lot friendlier.*"

After gaining her teaching qualifications Margaret returned to the North Island for her first teaching position in a large urban school with 1300 students. She spent two years there before applying for other jobs and securing her Aradale position, starting in 1992. Margaret shifted back south and quickly met people through a local church on her arrival. Margaret's

faith has always been important to her, and before living in Aradale she was actively involved in socialising with those she worshipped with. Margaret says:

*I think one thing that I have felt that I have lacked since coming to Aradale is having a **close female friend** who is a committed Christian. ...I've missed having someone to pray with and talk to about my relationship with God and I think that it has meant that my relationship with God has suffered.*

Being in a smaller congregation, with such a strong farming focus, Margaret met lots of males, and indeed one of those was her prospective husband, Simon. She had met him within the first two weeks of residing in Aradale, and they started dating not long after that as Margaret "*decided he was the pick of the bunch.*" The local minister was also keen to have another new "*single woman to marry off [to one of] the young farmers in the congregation!*"

As a newcomer to Aradale Margaret talked about the formation of her support networks:

*...the two main places would be the church and the school but not necessarily as formal organisations but rather the **individuals** within those organisations gave me support.*

The other young women teachers who were previous newcomers to Aradale became important to Margaret. She socialised with them out of work and they became her friends, along with people she played sport with and met at the local Young Farmers' Club (YFC). However, Margaret comments that a lot of the groups in Aradale seem to be mutually exclusive rather than overlapping in membership, which she found strange.

Margaret recalls her arrival as the new teacher in Aradale very vividly:

*I remember within a few days people had worked out who I was and I was walking down the street and people would stare at me and say, "There's the **new teacher**." You could tell that was what they were saying and because I was living in the schoolhouse and it didn't take long for people to work out where the new person lived.... I think everyone was going, "That's the **new teacher**," because I know that Simon told me that his family discussed it when I arrived.*

This sense of leading such a visible life was a shock for Margaret compared to teaching in a large urban school and living in a separate location where she could maintain a private life. Yet, she was happy to be a role model in this rural community because she did nothing to be ashamed of. Margaret thrived on the extra responsibility of running her own department in this smaller school, although she acknowledges, "*We were coping with being heads of departments without the status and the money that goes with it at the big schools.*" However, she likes the fact that within two years of arriving in Aradale she knew all the students, even those children she did not teach. The school roll was around 270 when Margaret began teaching and was down to about 220 four years later when she stopped teaching full-time.

The fact that Margaret had only gone out with one man in Aradale was important to her and how she thought others perceived her in the community. She states:

...there were three years of us going out together and I think because we went out together for so long that people started to think of us in terms of a couple anyway even though I didn't live in the [Hurstfield] community. So I don't know that would have changed that much when we got married although I suppose it confirmed for everybody that I would be around for a lot longer.

Margaret says, *"I am very happy being married to the person that I am married to and I am extremely in love and we have a lot of fun together."* She also admits meeting more locals, who have become friends, since marrying Simon three and a half years ago. Margaret sees that her husband *"has status and he has respect in the community"* because he is chairman and president of two local Hurstfield clubs. She thinks that this adds to her status. Margaret changed her family name to her husband's when she married Simon. She compares that to women who are living in an urban context and keep their own family name after marriage: *"Rural communities tend to be a lot more conservative...whereas in the city it is not really an issue at all...it is an issue if you change your name."*

Soon after her marriage to Simon, Margaret became a mother, and that was something she was ready for. She ceased teaching full-time before the birth of Paul and now enjoys her farming lifestyle living. Margaret reflects on her status as a mother:

*I think that if you **don't choose to be** a mother then everyone is going to be talking about that.... I had Paul...just over a year after we had got married and I don't think people thought of that as being abnormal either whereas **in the city** people would be expecting you to wait for **years**. I was ready and I did it and I don't think people thought of it as that unusual because becoming a mother is something that everyone does [in this rural community].*

Now as a mother of two small children, who does some relief teaching and private tutoring in her specialist subject, Margaret has noticed a shift in her identity: *"It obviously changed when I gave up teaching and became a parent. Now I think people think in terms of [me] being a mother of a young family."* Margaret now spends more time with other parents, like talking with others at playgroup. She contrasts this with visiting her former colleagues: *"When I go to the staff room at school in a way I feel unaccepted...they are always very busy and I feel like if I have made the effort to come they should **drop everything** and find out about my family!"* Margaret does not feel she knows her rural neighbours, but believes this will change over time. She would like to invite a different family around, once a week or fortnight, to get to know them once Simon's winter sport has finished. Simon knows his neighbours because he grew up and was schooled with a lot of them; they are now his farming friends.

Margaret expresses ambivalence about whether she is a local or not. She feels accepted in Hurstfield but admits, *"If I knew more people in this community then I would feel a lot more like an insider. I don't feel like I am an **outsider** but I don't feel like I know enough people well that I feel like a local."* Yet, she also identifies herself as a local:

*I think I probably think of myself as a local, I feel I have been here long enough to be a local but I know that other people don't. Whereas...people our age that have gone through school here, they are definitely a local. And then ones who have married into the community and who have got grown up children by now, if you have been here twenty or thirty years then I would imagine that you'd have **the right** to call yourself a local by now. If you have sent your children through the **local school** then you have **probably** gotten to know people so well that they probably struggle to remember a time when you hadn't been there that sort of thing. So **probably** a local is someone that yeah you can't think of a time when they haven't been there and for me that is anyone who has been here longer than me basically.*

Margaret feels like she belongs to two communities, the immediate Hurstfield one with its two-teacher school and Aradale where she does relief teaching. But she has concerns with the local primary school closing. Margaret says, *"When the school closes **down** and I am going to send my children to Aradale...I think that it will require more effort."* She had previously anticipated getting to know more parents in the Hurstfield community when her children were school age, but now Margaret realises she will meet parents from a wider area.

Margaret has an open mind when it comes to the career options for her sons. When the possibility of their becoming farmers is mentioned, Margaret states on more than one occasion, *"You just have to be the best at what you **choose to be**."* Margaret could have been comfortable with an urban lifestyle but loves this rural one and would not change it for anything else. At several different times she refers to her life as a whole package:

*I think it is a package and I have come here and adapted to this lifestyle and I have **fallen in love** and I am very happy in my marriage and happy in my life as a mother at the moment.... Well if I had got that job in [a major North Island city] and I'd gone up there my life would be completely **different** and I could possibly be just as happy there because I didn't **know** that there was anything else.*

However, Margaret reflects that people seem to be accepted or welcomed quite differently into this rural community depending on their land ownership status or occupation:

*...if they come and buy a farm, because it is such a **commitment** people think they are coming **to stay** so I think people are a lot more welcoming. But I think people coming to live in the **village**, people they go off to **work** and so people don't see them during the day.*

Financial status is something that Margaret views quite differently from the way she would if she were living in an urban setting. She values her comfortable lifestyle, yet independence, and acknowledges that there is more financial pressure for young couples in the city to work

and pay off mortgages before they consider having children. Before Paul was born they lived off Simon's farm income on a trial basis for a year to ensure they could support themselves financially. Now Margaret states:

I don't feel like I have to go back to work because most women don't go back to work in the community, in a rural community, it is not seen as being unusual. ...Being a full-time mother is part of me now and I don't know if it would have been if I were living in an urban community. I can see that it is unusual for women to go back to work once they have had children in a rural community.

Margaret then reflects, "Oh maybe I am not a **real woman** because I can't juggle a career and being at home and children." Yet, home is where she now enjoys putting her energy. She also states; "I think that rural women are a lot more conservative and I think that is what I am." But, Margaret also has a clear sense of who she is and asserts her independence; she believes that her husband is capable of getting his own meals on days when she is not there to cook for him.

Margaret at times wishes her own family of origin, particularly her mother, lived closer in order to see more of Paul and Mark growing up. The cost of air travel to the provincial North Island prohibits them from seeing each other as often as they would like. However, they do aim to visit each other annually at a minimum. In contrast, Simon's parents live nearby in Southview with his father out working on the farm most days of the week. The rest of Simon's family lives in rural locations. Margaret says,

He has two sisters...who live in rural areas, one has a farm and the other is a teacher. But the others...one lives on a farm block [just out of the city] and the other has just bought a farm block...so they have certainly got that rural connection from growing up.

Being a Christian is a core part of Margaret's life; instilling values and morals in the children and spending time on pastoral commitments as a church leader are important to her. Being in such a small community, Margaret does miss having other young women friends with whom she can pray and share in other parts of her faith at a deeper level. Most of her friends she met as a teacher, playing mixed sport, at church, through YFC, or they are the wives of her husbands friends with whom they socialise.

Margaret identifies herself strongly in a number of roles. She says, "I am a teacher or an ex-teacher, the fact that I have married a local, the fact that I have two children, they sort of make up everything that is me." Later Margaret adds:

I would probably see myself firstly as a mother, that is probably, yeah at the moment that is what I want to be and that is the most important to me. Then after that I would probably see myself as a partner whereas I know that other people would probably put that a lot lower than wanting to go back to having a career or something. I think also at this stage being a teacher is something that goes well down on the scale.... There is also another thing that comes into mind with my involvement in the local church as a member of the Parish

Council. I see myself as a leader in the church and as [names particular] Convenor, that is sort of a leadership role, and because of the time commitment it comes up further than teaching... that it is basically, my main roles.

I still feel like an individual and if I feel like people are linking me too much to Simon and not giving me my own personality and my own individuality then I assert it and just remind people that I am an individual. But then at the same time there is a lot of the way people perceive Simon gives me a bit of status.

3.5 Emma (b 1966)

*I hated having to move into town as a child. I always wanted to get back to it [the country] and so this is the way I thought I could by going teaching in a rural community and **maybe** meeting a rural farmer and settling (laughter) **and it worked!***

Yeah so even my grandmother she went teaching in a rural environment and married a farmer. I don't know if he was a farmer when she married him though! ...[My mother] she went nursing and then married a farmer or farm labourer or whatever my Dad was [before she went teaching]. I think I am about the sixth generation female teacher in my family.... You see we have had the rural background and the urban training and then gone back.... [On my husband's side of the family] his mother was [a teacher and] his grandmothers were. I don't know how far back they can go, but he is used to these highly educated women because he was brought up with them. And his sister has been to university and his Mum has got a Masters degree and both his grandmothers had degrees, his grandfather was a doctor. So like I can count four rural grandparents, he has only got the one and that is his grandfather. So I've actually got more than he has got!

Emma is 32 years old and has lived in the Aradale community for seven years since coming to teach at Aradale secondary school. Four years ago she married Ben, who farms close to Aradale. The farm is owned in partnership, with Ben currently having 66 per cent of the shares and Emma the remaining 33 per cent. They have a preschool child called Wayne and a baby, Howard, who was born during the research project. Emma prefers to identify herself as a Kiwi, but states she is a European if she has to choose an ethnic group.

While Emma's upbringing was predominantly urban, her mother says Emma found the shift from the country to the city difficult and refused to go to kindergarten. Emma started life in the wider rural district with her sister and brother:

Well I was born in Southview and grew up, spent my first four years in farms in Southview and then my parents decided to shift us to [city in neighbouring province] because they decided that there would be better opportunities for us. So I went to school in [provincial city] and when I finished school I decided I would go to university.

Emma's parents separated and "My mother...brought us up single handedly from the time I was *thirteen*," though Emma spent a lot of her holidays with her father who worked in the

rural sector. She says, *"We would be out with him doing TB testing and that sort of thing."* He then shifted to the farm where Emma recalls, *"I worked for my Dad for three seasons as his lambing shepherd and did three May holidays tractor driving for him."*

While still at primary school Emma recalls her faith lapsed when it came to going to church. She also remembers that her mother was a very important role model. Emma says:

She has always tried to make us independent and we have always had to work hard, anything we have wanted we have always had to work for. We never got anything "on a plate." So I think it is mainly my mother and my background that has shaped my character.

She later adds, *"We were brought up to be self-reliant."* Hospitality was also something that Emma learnt from her parents. She recollects, *"With my family, both Mum's side and my father's, it was nothing to have three or four extras at a meal table."* They would always pick up hitchhikers and have them to stay, sometimes for a month. Being hospitable is important to Emma now as an adult.

When Emma left school, and the provincial city she had lived in for twelve to fourteen years, she went to university. However, her summer vacations always involved some form of rural employment:

I worked as a landgirl straight out of school and then at [name of a high country station] one summer. I worked for the Forest Service one summer up the back of [names a lake] and for [a government department] doing a pasture survey and so...I've always been involved in the rural area.

During the six years Emma lived in the city she got Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Then, she says, *"I decided to go teaching! And then once I had finished my teaching diploma, I was trying to figure out where to go, so I applied for rural schools and ended up here in Aradale."* She used to get frustrated living in the city because she felt shut in, in direct contrast to living on the outskirts of the provincial city where Emma *"looked out into the rural environment."* So applying for work was a conscious decision about where she wanted to live: *"It was time to shift back to where I wanted to be."*

Emma applied for five positions but specifically wanted the one in Aradale because she had relations in the district, it was an hour's drive from both her parents, *"and close to the mountains, close to the rivers and it was a small school. I didn't want to teach in a big faceless school."* However, Emma remembers arriving in Aradale:

I think that if I had come from the North Island I would have found it more difficult. But because I had a name that people could associate with, I mean the fact that, once they had found out who my family was they could relate back to, I was related to half of them then it makes it easier. I think they accepted me more because I had a local name and a local family connection, I wasn't a real outsider.

She arrived in Aradale, her first full-time teaching position, before the school year started, so it took a while for people to know who she was. Emma lived in a teachers' house, "*[The] kids knew where I was and you felt like you were in a 'goldfish bowl', but you got used to it.*" Emma was used to living in a house with lots of trees around and more privacy.

School was her main support network because they set up a buddy system to help new teachers come to terms with teaching in a new school. There were more male teachers than females when Emma arrived at Aradale: "*I reckon I got my job, because they needed more female teachers. But nowadays the men are outnumbered and they are outnumbered in senior staff, there are three women and two men.*" Emma also joined a sports club and the local cultural organisation in Aradale. She got to know lots of different people:

The people in the supermarket were really friendly, the milkman was friendly and because they accepted you and the parents started to accept you it made it easier. I think if they [the parents] hadn't have accepted you it would have been very difficult because they hold a lot of power.

Another important place in Aradale for Emma was the local library, which serves her purposes as an avid fiction reader. However, while feeling accepted she was also very aware of the way people perceive the teacher should behave:

...because people had this pure idea of what a teacher was, citizens that didn't drink and didn't smoke, those sorts of things. And I know sometimes going out with my sister in Aradale, she was a bit rowdy and loud, she would sort of drink me under the table. I felt sometimes that eyes were on me that, "Oh that's not what young lady teachers should do."

Being part of the community by living in Aradale meant Emma would meet parents on the street, in the sports club or at the pub. When Emma had been in Aradale about two years she joined Young Farmers:

*I actually found them harder to get in tune with than anyone else.... I think it is because they saw me as a **female on the prowl**. I was with a friend of mine and they found her more attractive and so they buzzed round like bees in a honey pot around her. Whereas I was the one that would get in and do things and so it depended a bit on the people involved in the organisation I suppose....*

While some of these men may have been intimidated by Emma, she says that her friends are a bit more worldly and more educated, having all been to university or polytechnic. Emma acknowledges, "*They have all had careers and some still do. The farm is not the be all and end all of their lives, which it may be for some other women.*"

While Emma strategically came to a rural area because she wanted to go farming, she had three years to meet people in her own right and had established her own identity before being introduced to her prospective husband, Ben, through mutual friends. Emma remembers saying, "*There was nobody decent in Aradale and I was going to move.*" Her

friend explained there was someone overseas who was worth waiting to meet; another teacher had also told her this as well as the minister. Emma recalls, *"He had been home two weeks, I think we had dinner and that was it. We were married a year later!"*

Emma and Ben lived together for a year in the country, and this was more private than living at the "goldfish bowl." Emma says that people did not know about their relationship for a long time:

It was when one of my students said, "I saw your car coming out of 'so and so's' place early this morning Miss Bates." I said, "Oh did you?" And because our relationship started in the Christmas holidays we had all the holidays together before I had to go back to work.

Both Emma and Ben had the same friends, so when they got married things were easier. She says, *"You have to think about when you get married is how are each other's friends going to handle it. Well we didn't have that problem because our friends were joint friends."* They had a community wedding in the Aradale church which Ben's family attended *"because I hadn't lived in [provincial city] for ten years or so."* The reception was in the local memorial hall with *"the church ladies do[ing] the food and the sports club ladies to do the bar."* They decided to invite as many people as possible and so lots of local people were involved. Emma took her husband's family name at marriage, *"I don't know if it has altered my status or not.... It's easier with businesses and things because it is a known name, now I'm known as Emma Hanson, you just say, 'Put it on the account!'"* Emma comments that her family are the *"rugby, racing and beer"* sort whereas Ben's family *"are quite a visual family...[and] more sedate"* in the rural community.

Ben's family are strong churchgoers locally and Emma admits, *"I like going to church when we get there."* However, Emma is unsure if her mother-in-law, Karen, is accepted as a local here. Karen is also a teacher who came to this community and married a farmer. Emma says, *"I think she said it was when she had children that she was asked to be on committees and things that she started to feel local but up until that time she hadn't."* She has been wonderful in helping Emma make the transition into Aradale life.

Emma was still seen as a teacher after marriage because she worked full-time for two years before Wayne was born; even then, she did not give up teaching altogether but she continued in a relief capacity. Emma says:

Well basically I am employed full time here [on the farm] whether it is inside, which is not often because I don't like being inside. And you can tell that as everything shows, I only cleaned the floor on Tuesday. I have my marking job, which is often one day a fortnight, and the odd teaching day. That is about it.... So at the moment it is basically keeping our heads above water here and that is why I work on the farm so we don't have to employ somebody...I don't know how I am going to do the "lambing beat" seven months pregnant. Might be a bit cumbersome I think!

Emma finds having children tiring and fun but it is what she always wanted. She is interested in watching their development and admits to previously wanting only one but is now considering a third child. Emma perceives herself in this community as, "*The mother of the next generation of Hansons!*"

She feels "*a bit lazy*" when it comes to doing community work but admits she has been involved in fund raising for the crèche and would like to do more of it. Wayne goes to crèche regularly so she likes to support their fundraising. The church mums' group serves as a social function and Emma likes to attend to support her mother-in-law who is involved in running it. She also says, "*It is socialisation for Wayne which is important, different from crèche, because it is not structured you just let them go.*" The older people in the community see children as positive and Emma tells a story of Karen taking Wayne into Aradale and having doors opened more than usual: "*I think people like to see that the community is going to continue, so they like to see babies. They like to see wee ones.*" Emma sees that, on a practical level, children provide jobs in Aradale's crèche and in the schools.

Emma defines community as "*The **whole thing**, it means the **people**, services, the area, the whole thing, the way it works... It's the area you live in; it's the **feeling** that people have for the place.*" She feels that she belongs to two physically defined communities and two symbolic communities. The first two are the rural community, which is separate from Aradale, which she feels a member of also. And then she states, "*The community of teachers but I don't feel a major part of that anymore either, now it is probably following in being a mum, 'the community of mothers.'*" She enjoys her rural life:

*I like it, I feel happy. Healthy, I don't think I was healthy before, lots of fresh air and space, lots of space. And it's not, I'm not tied in, I'm not **shut into** a little **box**, especially in this house with all the wonderful views and space. I really enjoy living here.*

Also, Emma says, "*There are lots of people I can talk to, locals and teachers and farming people.*" If she does feel claustrophobic on the farm then she goes into Aradale.

To be termed a local, Emma sees belonging and acceptance as important. She considers a local as:

...someone who has lived here a few years but some people might think that you have to live here twenty, thirty, forty years. I consider myself a semi-local mainly because of my background, where my family is from. I don't feel a local in [provincial city] even though I spent most of my life there; somebody who has lived here a few years, but I don't know what time scale that few years consists of.

In contrast the only people that she views as outsiders are the tourists "that come in for a couple of days and then go." To summarise, Emma says:

I am part of the Aradale community but I don't necessarily participate in it at the moment, so community to me is the school, it's the people, it's the clubs, the church and it is everything. Sometimes being out here [on the farm] you don't feel part of the Aradale community. Whereas the likes of [settlement near Hurstfield] or Hurstfield they have quite separate 'get togethers' so I think their concept of community is probably a lot better than out here.

Emma considers that the most crucial thing in creating her sense of belonging in this community is, "My family name, my maiden name, possibly my married name and just being an **independent** person, I think. Yeah that would be it."

She also says, "I am a fairly private person and I like people for a while but then I do like them to go! Then I'm quite happy!" As a rural woman Emma notices that:

*I think being intelligent too, puts a lot of men off. I think country men are a bit quiet and they are not used to a forthright person who expects to get her own way, or earns a higher [wage] or has been brought up that sort of way. Some men still expect women to bow down and do as they are told and I think when somebody doesn't do that they find it quite difficult. Whereas some of the women that I have met whose sons were in the Young Farmers were like that whereas not all women are like that. **Thank goodness!** ...I don't know if that little mousy woman exists anymore, I don't know many!*

Later she states, "I am not quite as stropky as I used to be, I don't know, maybe I am more!" Emma certainly values her independence.

While Emma is happy with her own company, being a good host is also important to her. She generalises this as a trait of other rural women:

*...being hospitable is one of the ones that I would associate with rural women, being able to put a meal down on the table if the stock agent...or the tanker driver arrives at lunchtime. ...If the meter man has come then being able to say, "Do you want to stay for lunch?" I think that is a trait of rural women. But only of **southern** rural women, I don't know if it is for all rural women.... I mean some rural women will get out and get their hands dirty and others won't.... I can't really characterise that. Because the rural women that I have things to do with here have had urban backgrounds, beforehand, before becoming rural.*

However, she also acknowledges that categorising rural women is difficult as her experiences and her friends have all come from similar urban backgrounds where they have all had some form of tertiary education.

Emma, who has relatives in Southview, also adds, "My aunt, she grew up on a farm and is now married to a farmer and she gets in there and gets dirty, gets in there 'boots 'n all' but some women aren't like that." Emma's mother and father both help separately on the farm; her marriage to Ben has brought them each back to their rural roots:

I remember my Mum saying, "Don't aim for a farmer you will never make it".... She told me not to aim too high or something.... Oh she loves it because it has actually brought her back in touch with her rural roots. I mean she comes up here and she gets herself as dirty as I do.... I mean he [Dad] has looked after this place a couple of times for us while we have been away. He has come on and managed it and he comes in and he can impart some of his knowledge.

Emma says both her siblings work in a rural industry, so while she and Ben are involved in the primary production, they are doing the secondary production. She says, *"Mum had these three children which she brought up in an urban environment and they are all working in the rural system."*

It is important for Wayne to have time in the city and vice versa so that *"his cousins come up here for some rural time,"* Emma believes. She takes him to the museum and other similar attractions in the city and says, *"When you get into town he sure stands out...[and says], 'Look at those lights Mummy, look at that Mummy, look at that.'"* Hearing these reactions from her son reinforces for Emma that the rural/urban connections must be maintained.

Nowadays Emma is still involved with relief teaching but finds it completely different from her experience as a full-time teacher just two years earlier:

I had a bit last term but before that I only had one day. I mean the kids now don't even know who I am which is a real interesting feeling before you go into a classroom they would say, "Hi Mrs Hanson, how are you?" But when you get to the juniors now they say, (mimicking a child's voice) "What's your name? Who are you?" It's a real sort of come down....

Financially, Emma has also noticed a big difference since stopping full-time teaching. Emma paid the mortgage, kept herself and Ben fed and paid everything personal for the first two years of their marriage, while she was teaching full-time. *"Having put \$50 000 odd cash plus all the rest...I was **determined** to have something, some acknowledgment of that piece."* While Emma and Ben are partners in the farm in a 33/66 split, she foresees that it will become a 50/50 partnership over time.

Emma now has signing rights for the farm chequebook; originally she did not, which used to *"drive me up the wall."* Her personal income has dropped dramatically:

*When I was working [full-time] it was a lot higher than what it is now. We are probably just above the bread line now, whatever the bread line is. We have **enough** to cover ourselves.... Yeah we are comfortable; we are not hugely wealthy.*

Emma says when they need to buy something new they need to think about it and hope she has had a day of relief teaching first. The marking that she does for a correspondence course covers household expenses every month, while the teaching covers the new things like a video, clothes washer and bread maker. Off farm employment *"Gives me my own*

little income to play with [at] the supermarket...or I can go and buy a new pair of trousers and not feel guilty." Emma says of their finances, "Both of us have our own bank account and we have the farm account and I **wouldn't have it any other way**. We are independent."

Emma identifies strongly with, "Some of the church people, some of the farming women [and] teaching, some of the teachers still but not that I have as much to do with them as I used to." She says:

*I'm a mad farmer's wife! ...I get out and I do things with my husband, I drive the tractor (she chuckles) I lamb the ewes, I do that sort of thing. I'm a **teacher** of sorts, I suppose, I don't know if people still see me as that or not.... I think they see me as Ben's wife, Wayne's mother, farm partner, I don't know.... **Yeah, I do**, for the likes if I go to the library or the supermarket **I am just** known as Emma, I was that before I met Ben.*

Emma uses these words to describe herself as "hard working, hopefully hospitable with other **people** [and] caring." She also says:

*Well I worked for two years after I got married and so I was still full-time working and then when I got pregnant I took leave and so I was basically working here [on the farm]. But my job description I would give myself is farmer, mother, teacher, I don't see myself as a housekeeper I **hate it!** ...Like going to crèche they see me as the teacher because I am usually dropping Wayne off when I go to teach. People say, "Oh you've been teaching today or have you been doing this?" But if I go in my farm clothes they don't say, "Have you been farming today?" But outsiders still probably see me as a teacher.*

Emma summarises herself quite succinctly in one line: "I'm a farming mother who does the odd day teaching."

3.6 Sue (b 1967)

*It amazed me that you were on a meat market. I felt like I was being eyed up and that didn't interest me. I had no interest; I **didn't** come here to **find a farmer**, I **didn't come here** to find a guy, I came here because it was a **job**. It was just foul, absolutely foul, and yet I met some really neat people during that year and made some really neat friends, but I felt like I was being watched.*

*Teachers have some obvious **maternal qualities** that farmers find **attractive**. I think the lifestyle suits plus they are new blood coming into the community that comes in and they are obviously single if they are female and coming into the community. So **new blood catch it!** It keeps the gene pool up and provides some variety plus of course to farmers they are attractive because they obviously can read and they view them as moderately educated or in their view educated depending on where they stand.... Even if a teacher chooses to work her school holidays and everything can be worked around **lambing** and **the lot**. Harvest is right in the good time, so I do think farmers look and think oh teacher new blood!*

Sue is a full-time primary schoolteacher who is married to Murray. They live in a big character home, which they are currently redecorating, near Hurstfield. Sue, aged 30, came to the Aradale area five or six years ago for her first teaching position of nine months, but returned to the Southview district recently for permanent employment. She has lived with Murray for over two years, having been married to him for eight or nine months, and kept her own family name. Officially she is known as Sue Edwards Clausen but in the classroom she only uses her own family name. Sue works at a three teacher rural school close to Southview, while Murray works in Southview three days a week in his professional capacity. The rest of the time Murray works on the farm that he owns in partnership with his parents, John and Grace Clausen. Grace is also a teacher who married a farmer, making Sue a second-generation teacher to marry into the Clausen family (refer Section 2.3 for Grace's life history). Sue's perspective is unique, in that she is the only woman interviewed who does not have children. When it comes to ethnic group, Sue says she identifies as a New Zealander.

Born and bred in a provincial New Zealand town, and initially schooled in the same location, Sue grew up with her parents and a younger brother. Sue's mother came from a farming background in that same South Island province with all her siblings being dairy farmers; while on Sue's father's side of the family one uncle, a transport operator, relies on the rural population. However, Sue recollects:

I never learnt to milk cows...it is something I never chose to identify with.... And I had been like that since four because all I ever saw was my cousins covered in cow-shit gumboots and they stunk. So who would want to marry a farmer and I just didn't have any social identity with it.

Sue acknowledges that she came from a varied background; her father owned a company, and when the family shifted to another town in the South Island, to enhance the children's secondary schooling, "we probably became **quite affluent**." Sue was used to living in three houses, two that were holiday homes, and appreciated having parents with a very progressive outlook on life:

*Mum and Dad had a lot of **interest** in life. They were not insular people, they had a [names type of] farm down [at the holiday destination] as well as Dad worked a full-time job managing a company. As well as they had been overseas setting up companies...and so to me life is not narrow.*

Sue's parents moved overseas leaving both children in the house by themselves and that was a very formative time:

*I can look back on it now and say it was an **amazing forming time** in my life, but if I was there at the time I would probably tell you it was **difficult**. I am best friends with my brother, particularly due to the experiences and closeness developed during this time. There were only the two of us to sort things out, he was only 16 and I was only 19 and so I would say that that was*

*one of the biggest influences on my life.... And that probably characterises a lot of other things when I was growing up if you went home for a weekend Mum and Dad were usually going out the door to be somewhere else or they were somewhere else. So that, I don't see home as being **one place**.*

Sue talked a lot about how important her mother has been, and still is, in her life. As a child Sue reminisces about visiting a *"friend once whose Mum didn't work and stayed at home and every day, she came home they had scones and jam and cream and our house wasn't like that! My mother was **extremely independent**."* In more recent years Sue values her mother's continued interest in fashion, what is on at the movies and in whatever is happening. She says, *"I want to be like that at 56 too, still interacting and growing with changes in life."*

Before going to train as a teacher Sue worked in a North Island city, a transition she found easy to make: *"I identify with cosmopolitan areas."* She then got her teaching qualifications and studied for a degree concurrently, back in a major South Island city. After leaving teachers' college, five or six years ago, Sue did not receive a permanent teaching position. Instead, her first job was as a Taskforce Green teacher employed by the government and the school for nine months. She flatbed in Aradale for that time and traveled 15 kilometers each way to the primary school, near to Hurstfield where she now lives. Sue was attracted by the prospect of being employed rather than the particular location. On arrival at the teachers' flat, Sue was struck by the offer from her male flatmate to organise dates:

I mean as soon as I moved in there, one of the guys in there was from the local rugby team, and he straight away offered that he could get four dates for me if I wanted to get jacked up with anyone.... It was just that I was gob smacked; they don't even know me...these people don't even know my personality or anything. I was just amazed but I was the new teacher in town and so it was like it was almost a competition.

By contrast, Sue found that getting involved in two different sports clubs was a great way to get to know people locally, and in fact that is how she met Murray near the end of her teaching year. However, she still returned to the city regularly at weekends, where a lot of her friends and support systems were, because she felt quite isolated in Aradale. *"I can honestly say living here is very lonely as a female because people I would identify with socially and mentally have left."* Life in a rural township was very visible and public for Sue. She felt that there was a certain role that she was supposed to take on:

*People knew when I had **been out** and I when I **hadn't been** out...I was used to living my own life.... Before I moved here my mother gave me the most horrendous lecture about what I was allowed to do and what I wasn't allowed to do, this had a huge influence, I didn't find social situations relaxing.*

Sue's mother had seen the teacher arrive into the rural area where she herself had lived and was trying to warn her daughter of the social pressures she would encounter. But Sue recalls, *"Oh God, I was prim and proper to the point of being prissy and boring."*

After nine months in Aradale, Sue was offered a teaching position back in the city, which she took for one year. However, the irony was that she now found she *"missed the peacefulness"* of rural life. This was compensated for by regular trips to stay at Hurstfield with Murray, with whom she was now going out. Sue's lifestyle had changed so much in that nine months that she found *"back in town I would probably do more isolated things, if I went for a swim I went by myself or I went with a friend and would go for a beer afterwards."* This was in complete contrast to a whole afternoon of socialising at Aradale or Hurstfield sport, where Sue admits, *"I've even taken along my plate!"*

The offer of permanent work, at her current school, came because Sue was known from her previous teaching in the district where she had met her future colleagues on courses. By this stage, at 26 years of age, Sue had started to put roots down in the region and *"didn't want to keep moving. I was starting to identify with the area.... I choose to live in the South Island. I am a Mainlander."* The school, *"which isn't quite on the endangered list yet but must be getting there,"* was full of children who were *"predominantly rural"* although it has tended to attract children from Southview also. Sue comments:

I mean there are some really nice social factors in a rural school; for the white middle class parent it represents nice things in that the influences aren't there of some other factors. They [the parents] are very conservative, which is what some people want for their children. The teachers have a tendency to be very conservative at those schools as well.

Sue finds that she has problems teaching the Maori part of the curriculum because parents have an attitude that it is not important. She is also teaching children with major behavioural problems and sees a lot of foster children coming through the school. These problems have turned away some prospective parents and pupils who were previously attracted. To contrast this rural teaching with the urban, Sue comments that:

I think bigger schools, there is a higher professional standard; also I think in a town school you have got parents coming to see you every day. They have an expectation just as in their workplace they have an expectation put on them. Whereas I don't think that some rural parents have that quite the same.... The school I encountered in [the city] parents knew exactly where their children should be and where they wanted them to be. They had expectations and they had demands and they wanted to know how you were going to meet them and there is nothing wrong with that. That is market driven, that demands a professional teacher. And some of our rural schoolteachers have been there too long and have become lacklustre in their approach and need to go out there and relearn it or something, like have a sabbatical or encounter new professional challenges. I hope I never get to that.

For Sue, moving in with Murray was no different from marriage, she found that the wider community differentiated between marriage and living with a partner. Sue vividly recalls:

The local community has welcomings for people when they move into the community. Well after I had been living here a year there was a phone-call went through my in-laws, and Murray and I by that stage were engaged, saying, "It wasn't appropriate to welcome me at this stage." So that was all right, but this year it is appropriate to welcome me because I am married!

Sue felt annoyed with the situation. She found this view ignorant and regressive, especially in a community that she thought would want "to grow and sustain growth." However, other urban women who had previously been newcomers had welcomed Sue by bringing muffins and leaving plants at the back door on her initial arrival in Hurstfield. With marriage came an increased acceptance by the wider community; Sue sums it up by saying:

*I am also now **safe**, I am not someone who is living with Murray Clausen, they now identify Murray and Sue as a couple whereas previously they probably didn't, it lacked the permanency perhaps required for a rural community.*

What is important for Sue is that she is in Hurstfield because she has chosen to live with her partner, rather than chosen Hurstfield itself. She reflects:

I am living here because I want to be with Murray...I don't identify with Hurstfield whatsoever...I do not have children going to the local school...I don't need to be employed in the area nor am I reliant on my husband for money.

Sue later admits, "Currently I can't imagine **not earning my own money**." While Sue is a career person, her supporting role to her husband is also important. Sue acknowledges getting involved in the A & P Show, which she would never have previously considered, because Murray has aspirations to be involved in the association in the future.

Sue considers that most women who come into this community have their mothers as strong role models. She had ingrained in her that "*the garden should look nice and the meal will be on time...some people see me as quite individualistic and yet when I am **at home** I am really a passive supporter of Murray.*" Sue perceives rural women as strong, independent women who support their husbands; she stresses the need for independence to survive in this environment because the men have grown up with support networks locally "*whereas the women become more insular.*" Compared to living in an urban environment Sue feels that it is "*not so much that my personality has been stifled but my lifestyle has been stifled.*" The things she misses most are the convenience of city life, the movies, going to shows, having access to a heated swimming pool and the like. Her support system of friends in the city is also an essential part of Sue's life at Hurstfield; she keeps in contact with them via email, phone and mail. However, one of the advantages of this rural lifestyle "*and having a nice big house...[with] heaps of room*" means there is space for friends to stay.

To conclude, Sue chooses many different ways to identify herself, relating to whatever environment she is in, whether it is rural or urban, at school or at her home:

I choose to be me and I enjoy the lifestyle that I am encompassed with in the country and I take the facets of that and yet I have still got the facets of really enjoying being in town and taking a mix of both [lifestyles].

*I belong to my work community, my school community, welcomed or not welcomed and **now as Mrs Clausen** [what some in the community call her] I am **part of** the Hurstfield community; a lot of the communities. It depends what hat I am wearing, so it depends where I am at the time and what I am doing. My major thing is that wherever I am at the time I will try and wear the hat that fits that community best.... I think communities take work and they mean responsibility and so I don't see that I belong in one community; it depends where I am at the time.*

3.7 Conclusion

These brief life histories of the "30 something" generation give an indication of who the women are, beginning with their family backgrounds in urban, and to a lesser extent rural, New Zealand. However, the focus was on what their life has been like over the last decade in Aradale and/or Hurstfield as teachers, wives, mothers, farmers and community members more generally. All "30 something" women completed a university education as well as their teaching training, in direct contrast to the "40 to 50 something" generation introduced in Chapter Two. Emma was also a postgraduate student who achieved a Master's degree. A theme emerged among these "30 something" women of multiple generations of teachers "marrying into" the same farming family: Sally was the third generation while Emma and Sue were the second generation of women teachers to marry a farmer (Sue's mother-in-law, Grace from Section 2.3, was also interviewed). Emma was the sixth generation of women from her maternal family to train as a teacher, and her husband came from a family that highly valued educated women. Emma discovered during her YFC days that all rural people were not so open minded about strong professional women who spoke their mind. Despite the wider opportunities for women, as identified in Section 3.2 "Setting the Context," these women's stories show a continuity with the "40 to 50 something" generation. They have still chosen to train and work as teachers, one of two traditional career paths for women (Else 1986:iv, Middleton and May 1997:61).

Like the prior generation, these "30 something" women led highly visible lives as teachers in a small rural community, particularly when living and/or socialising in Aradale. All women continued their teaching careers after marriage to a farmer. The "30 something" women who were mothers also returned teaching full-time, part-time or in a relief capacity while their children were very young. This was not an accepted option for women two or three decades earlier. For two women keeping their own family name was an important issue.

This would not have been considered appropriate a generation ago, before the 1970s Women's Liberation movement. Living arrangements were a lot freer for the "30 something" women in the 1990s, two of whom lived with their partners before marriage. Their experience compared more favourably than that of their "40 something" counterpart, Clair, who felt a lot of public resistance to her open pre-marital living arrangements in the 1970s. Attitudes were shifting within this rural community which now made it easier for Emma to be a farmer and the women of both generations to be more equally involved in the business of their family partnership.

Sally mentioned overseas travel, a theme that emerged with the previous generation with both Grace and Louise travelling overseas and now each having a child living in another country. Sally also communicated with one of her siblings living elsewhere in the world. During Sue's formative years, her parents lived overseas for a period, leaving Sue and her brother at home to look after themselves. Two women spoke of keeping regular contact with friends and family around the country and world, and one specifically used the example of email. In the 1990s these women, while living in a small rural community, were involved in social relationships throughout the globe, using the modern technology available to them.

Now I have introduced these women, through re/presenting their ontological narratives I want to analyse the themes that have emerged for both generations. I will contrast the similar and/or differing identities of the "40 to 50 something" women of Chapter Two with the "30 something" women from this chapter. In Chapter Four I will explore the identities the women narrate particularly at an ontological level. These are the narrative identities that they constitute more personally via the immediate social relations they have with people on a day to day basis, like teacher, wife, mother, and farmer. In Chapter Five the stories the women told as they reflected on their community life are informed more by public narratives, as are the identities they narrate of being a community member, a local, and/or an outsider.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WOMEN AND THEIR IDENTITIES

But why do we premise or limit our understanding of people to their *work* category? Why should we assume that an individual of a collectivity has a particular set of interests simply because *one aspect* of their identity fits into one social category (Somers 1994: 624).

4.1 Introduction

I thought that identifying as a teacher would have been more important to the women than it was and so I was surprised by their readiness to identify as a mother when they left full-time teaching, the exception being Sue who still teaches full-time. Yet, as Somers highlights above, categorising a person by their work excludes all other aspects of their identity. It is too easy to place labels on people, and I realise that is what I did unconsciously as an interviewer when I initiated this project in 1997 and to a lesser extent during the 1998 interviews. Upon reflection, I was aware when I asked the women about maintaining their identity as a teacher after marriage, I kept pursuing the issue of whether anyone saw them as a teacher until I got answers more like I expected. I was not prepared for the multiple, shifting and varied responses that arose. The women represented in this thesis have many identities. Nor had I taken into account that identities changed at different stages of life. There was no clear one-dimensional "identity" based on occupation, as Hatch (1992:181) described the men of South Downs as having.

The majority of the women said, "*I am me*" when I asked what uniquely characterised them in this community; they found it difficult to articulate what "*me*" meant until I asked some more probing questions. For example, three women from the "40 to 50 something" generation said:

I am me! ...I couldn't even think of two or three words, I am just me and I just don't think that I will change (Grace, b 1940).

I can't think of anything that uniquely does [characterise me]. I am just me! (Louise, b 1941).

I don't identify myself with anything in particular. I am just me! (Clair, b 1953).

Three women from the "30 something" generation also talk about "*me*" in similar ways:

...that is a tricky one to answer, I see myself as me (Sally, b 1963).

...they accepted me anyway just as me (Emma, b 1966).

...I choose to be *me*... (Sue, b 1967).

Cohen (1994:9) cited Mead, from the American sociological tradition of symbolic interactionism, distinguishes between "me" and "I". Mead describes "me" as the "unthinking being - the enduring product of experience" in contrast to "I", the consciousness of being. These women may have chosen to answer "me" rather than thinking of a more comprehensive answer. Yet on closer reading of the transcripts, Mead's explanation of an inner essential self does not describe how the women talk more fully about their identities at other times in the interviews. However, Somers' (1994) narrative constitution of identity is a useful way of explaining these multiple identities.

In social constructionist terms the study of personhood or selfhood focuses on the social practices of people and their interactions with each other, that is, explanations are found in interactive processes that take place routinely between people (Burr 1996:7-8). The theoretical framework I am using from Somers' is classed as social constructionist. In this chapter I explore the ways these eight women have constructed different identities for themselves on a personal level. These identities have been constructed by accepting and/or resisting public narratives in society. The public narratives are the dominant discourses about public life, that is, the expectations re involvement in local activities about what constitutes appropriate behaviour. Examples of such narratives include drinking alcohol in public; relationships with the opposite sex; and expectations that married people play very gender specific roles. The backgrounds of these women prior to living in Aradale and/or Hurstfield was also of significance, as is the historical context in which their lives are set. In social constructionist terms all these subjectivities contribute to a person's selfhood. Davies sums up the "*I am me*" debate by stating:

I and me are terms used by the speaking subject to refer to the self which is both constituting itself and being constituted through that talk. One's own and others' stories of oneself are equally drawn from the collective repertoire of stories available in any social group (Davies 1993:17).

Most of the women have at some stage struggled with living in Hurstfield or Aradale, whether it has been for three decades or simply three years. The community has been described as "closed" by a few women, so maintaining their previous urban-based identities in this more conservative environment has been problematic (see Chapter Five for discussion of identities within the wider community context).

In this chapter, I explore the four key identities that the women personally used to describe themselves in Chapters Two and Three. These ontological narratives reflect that identities are not static and change over time; they can change from day to day and over a lifetime. These shifts are inherent in our lives and the stories we tell:

...it is through narrativity that we come to know, understand, and make sense of the social world, and it is through narratives and narrativity that we constitute our social identities. ...All of us come to *be* who we *are* (however ephemeral, multiple, and changing) by being located or locating ourselves (usually unconsciously) in social narratives *rarely of our own making* (Somers 1994:606).

All the six women quoted above identify in their respective interviews with a multiplicity of selves in addition to an essential "*me*," using labels like teacher, farmer's wife, mother and to a lesser extent farmer. While the women's stories tell of personal and interpersonal experience (ontological narrativity) they are also embedded in social and structural interactions over time. Some people call the wider context traditions or "webs of interlocution" but to Somers these stories are public narratives. For example, public narratives of teaching and motherhood are attached to intersubjective cultural and institutional formations like school, family and family farms, rather than a single person (Somers 1994:618-9). They are experiences shared with others in the same rural community and in other rural communities, even in different time frames.¹ Barbara and Margaret, neither of whom described themselves as "*me*," state:

...[being] a teacher I'm sure people don't think of me as a farmer's wife, it is all teaching now [but] life used to revolve around your kids [being a mother]... (Barbara, b 1956).

I think once again the package, what you see is what you get.... I am a teacher...I have married a local...I have two children [mother], they sort of make up everything that is me (Margaret, b 1966).

To expand on her earlier position of "*me*" Sally says:

*...first and foremost I see myself as **myself**; I am still very much Sally Frenchington [family name] rather than Sally Collinswood [married name] but then there is Dave's wife and mother of the children, and a farmer's wife I suppose to some extent. There is the wife and mother label but there is also the teacher... (Sally, b 1963).*

For Sally "*myself*" can be interpreted as "intersection of multiple subjectivities" (Armstrong 1997:21). She is a woman known by her family name, to her sisters and in her own mind, yet she also conducts day to day life using her married name, relating to many different people in the local community.

While "teacher" was originally how the women identified themselves, as Barbara, Margaret and Sally's narratives above illustrate, motherhood also became central to the identities of

¹ This thesis covers only two generations of stories. For an example from an earlier generation refer to Crawford's (1995) *Low Country Liz* for the experiences of a woman with a university education who trained as a teacher in the 1930s. "Liz" met her prospective husband while studying; she then taught for a year at an urban primary school before marrying the farmer and shifting to Southland. This story parallels with Sally, who over 50 years later, also met her prospective husband while studying, before shifting to Hurstfield and becoming a farmer's wife, mother and community member.

women during their life cycle. The exception in this research is Sue, the one woman without children interviewed. In this chapter I explore the different identities that the women personally take on as a Teacher (Section 4.2), Wife (Section 4.3), Mother (Section 4.4), and Farmer (Section 4.5), and how these themes emerged from their life histories. I conclude that these identities are not static, or mutually exclusive, but change and shift over time and space. Multiple identities are negotiated as they disrupt, or corroborate, the existing public narratives. While women talk of "*me*," this does not necessarily mean an essential self exists. Individual women manage their different identities and roles within that self on an ongoing basis (Section 4.6). I as the researcher arbitrarily analysed their lives in this way, neatly dividing each woman's life into several identities. The women did not present themselves as fragmented individuals.

4.2 Teacher

[At Aradale's secondary school]...*just about everybody on staff is married to a farmer. The only person [woman] that I could think of that wasn't married to a farmer is Tina Bruce and I thought she has married another teacher!* (Margaret, b 1966).

[At Aradale Primary School]...*a number of the [women] teachers on staff have married farmers, although they haven't come from a farming background...* (Barbara, b 1956).

In the first half of this century, teaching and nursing were the two professions to which women had access, involving one fifth of all women in the paid workforce (Else 1986:ix). Teachers were required to do Country Service within five years of completing their teacher training, so between 1938 and 1982 (McGeorge 2000) young women entered rural schools in great numbers, many staying in the community for a lifetime. In the 1989 survey of 1,500 New Zealand rural women, ten per cent had teaching qualifications and an equal number were trained nurses, while a further six per cent had some sort of university qualification (Ponter 1996:16).

All eight women interviewed have their respective teaching diplomas while the four "30 something" generation also have a university degree in their chosen disciplines. Three of these women, Sally, Emma and Sue, have a teacher mother-in-law married to a farmer and living locally. Sally is the third generation of teacher to marry into the Collinswood family, while Emma is the sixth generation of female teacher from her maternal family. Barbara spoke of her grandmother and sister being teachers, in contrast to Clair whose mother was a nurse. Clair says, "*This daughter **couldn't stand blood and still can't!** So she didn't fall into the role but close enough because I became a teacher and that was quite acceptable.*"

4.2.1 The Visible Rural Teacher

The women of both generations entered Aradale or Hurstfield with the initial purpose of teaching; they were known by the locals as teachers and identified themselves as teachers. Most came from urban teaching positions or an urban environment, and so found the close "gaze" of the locals controlling and overwhelming.² In small rural communities teachers were more visible than when living and working in urban environments where they generally did not mix with parents and pupils out of school hours. Women new to life in small communities can find their lack of anonymity frustrating because everyone knows who they are (Smith 1991:89). In this rural context teachers never escape their position and responsibilities, as the next few narratives illustrate:

Silly things arise that make you realise you are still seen as the teacher. You'd be playing Pictionary or something like that and someone would say, "Oh I want to go with Sally, she is the teacher," as if the teacher knows everything or you are seen as the one who would know (Sally, b 1963).

...it made it hard for you to go out and do something because people had this pure idea of what a teacher was, citizens that didn't drink and didn't smoke, that sort of thing (Emma, b 1966).

...there were times when I didn't want to be a role model, when I would rather have been able to do my own thing. I would rather have been anonymous in the community I suppose (Margaret, b 1966).

*I felt like I was **being watched**.... That was living in Aradale, people knew when I had **been out** and when I **hadn't been** out and I would be told, "**Oh** you had a good night, such and such a night." Perhaps I wasn't used to that intrusion on my life, I was used to living my own life and being around people who [thought] what I did was acceptable to them. Before I moved here my mother gave me the most horrendous lecture about what I was allowed to do and what I wasn't allowed to do and she scared me so much that I **didn't drink for the first year that I was here!** (Sue, b1967).*

These stories reflect how the teachers consider the residents of the rural community monitor their behaviour. The four narratives above illustrate the visible nature of these young women's lives, and how their professional identities as teachers carry over into their private lives. Sally experienced playing Pictionary where she was expected to be the knowledgeable one as the teacher, rather than being able to relax and socialise. The other "30 something" women spoke of being role models and model citizens who felt constrained to comply with social norms in terms of their behaviour. Drinking alcohol and smoking were not acceptable public pastimes for these women in this community.

² Foucault (cited in Cooper 1997:34 & 39) identifies the "gaze" as a technique of ensuring maximum visibility of individuals in the medical profession or prison settings. Foucault's "gaze" functions to objectify the social world by fixing or freezing individuals in a framework they cannot escape. In the rural context the locals "gaze" at the professional young teacher surveying her moves, ensuring she is visible and accountable for her actions as a newcomer/outsider.

Both parents and students alike made it difficult for the teachers to have a social life without being scrutinised and reminded of their role as a teacher. Sally says of teaching, *"It is almost like [being] the local cop."* Yet some women quickly learnt to ignore the local gossip about them. Clair, who arrived in Aradale 20 years prior to the previous four women, recalls playing a game of golf that students witnessed:

*You felt like you were sort of in a glass ball and everyone was looking in on you. I will **never** ever forget as long as I live the **third weekend** I was here...I had shifted out of the teachers' hostel by then and was flatting with these girls. And the first weekend that I was actually flatting with them they decided to go and have a game of golf with three or four of the guys... [So after] playing this game of golf...we went for dinner and then we went our various ways. Then we got to school on Monday morning, "**We saw you playing golf with your boyfriend**" (spoken in a high pitched tone imitating a child). I thought, oh gee that was news to me because I haven't got one of those! "**How did you know that?**" "Oh we saw you out on the golf course." And I thought oh my God there is nothing that you can do here without them knowing what you are doing. But after a while you got to the point where you thought what the hell if that keeps them interested, if they are talking about me then they are not talking about some other poor beggar. They will leave them alone (Clair, b 1953).*

As a young woman in Aradale this attention was initially daunting until Clair realised it was quite harmless; what she had initially thought was community interference was actually their way of caring for people. For a newcomer, however, it was difficult to make that distinction.

In the early 1960s, Hurstfield Primary School was the first teaching job for Louise, and she enjoyed the teaching position so much she applied for the full-time job that arose, while Grace arrived a year before Louise, having taught in the city before being attracted to this rural location. She and a friend were saving money for their big overseas travel and knew there was less opportunity to spend in the country. In the 1970s Clair and Barbara each had one rural placement after another. After her first year in Aradale, Barbara shifted annually, for three years, to new positions, while Clair stayed in the Southview district, accepting one long-term relieving position after another. She says, *"After three years you could actually apply for full-time jobs but often the [Education] Board started appointing you to particular jobs where they needed people."* The women all shared stories of placement in schools without interviews, visits to the school or prior meeting of the staff or headmaster.³

³ All four women mentioned male headmasters during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1978, 4.11 per cent of primary schools and 10 per cent of secondary schools had women principals (Aitken 1980:8). The language had changed by the 1990s and the teachers talked about principals rather than headmasters. One primary school in the fieldwork area had a woman teaching principal in the 1990s. Two women interviewed previously held Assistant Principal positions before they had children, while a further two women have worked as the Principal Release since returning to the workforce after being at home with children. This involves teaching the principal's class for specified hours depending on the size of the school, so the principals can concentrate on their administrative tasks.

By the 1990s the education system in New Zealand had changed, particularly with the introduction of Tomorrow's Schools.⁴ This younger generation of women teachers spoke of being able to choose their place of employment, which is in direct contrast to the narratives of teachers who arrived during the 1960s and 1970s. Sally, Margaret and Emma freely applied for their respective teaching positions at Hurstfield Primary School and at the secondary school in Aradale. Gone were the days of being "forced" into Country Service. Sue was assisted through Taskforce Green into her first rural position of nine months before teaching in the city. A year later she was offered a permanent position at her current rural school. Sue's colleagues met her on courses so her networking as a teacher had begun. She says, *"In the reality, employment comes to employment and I took the job that was permanent."* That happened to be in rural Southview.

These women have all constructed narratives about the public nature of their lives teaching in a rural community. They identified as citizens lacking a "private" life, and being seen as role models. For both generations, their identities as teachers were highly visible, while the "40 to 50 something" women had the added pressure of being placed in different schools every year, making them new teachers all over again.

4.2.2 Boarding, Teachers' Hostel, Flatting and the "The Goldfish Bowl"

Between the 1960s and 1990s the accommodation options for teachers changed dramatically in rural communities. In the 1960s Grace and Louise boarded with the Roses on their arrival in Hurstfield: *"At that stage you didn't even think about going flatting, that was another quite a big step,"* says Grace. A decade later the teachers' hostel in Aradale was the standard residence for teachers. Nevertheless, Clair and Barbara both went flatting after spending a few weeks at the hostel in the mid 1970s. For Clair the hostel was too full, so she and two teaching friends rented a series of farmers' cottages over three years. These became a base for young people locally, including the males who lived at home with their parents. Previously the pub was the only place to socialise with friends away from home. Clair recounts a story of a neighbour's "near accident" while watching her boyfriend leave the flat:

A lot of the mothers around here thought it was the "den of iniquity" but in fact Geoff was the only boyfriend I ever had down here. ...[A neighbour] said to Eugene [Geoff's father], "That boy of yours is going to wear that bloody driveway out." He nearly caused an accident one morning...[by] going along the road and he [the neighbour] watched Geoff go past so much that he drove the header across the road and nearly ended up in the ditch. Nearly in the irrigation ditch! He nearly went into the bloody great big

⁴ For an overview of education changes and restructuring refer to Codd *et al.* 1985; Middleton *et al.* 1990; Openshaw *et al.* 1993; Coxon *et al.* 1994; Ministry of Education 1994; and Smelt 1998.

[irrigation ditch] going down the side of the road and it was only Steven sitting behind him tooting the horn that stopped him! (Clair, b 1953).

Flatting in rural areas like Hurstfield in the mid 1970s was still considered radical and rare by many locals. For the young teachers who came from urban areas it was the norm.⁵ When Barbara arrived in Aradale there was a vacancy in Clair's flat, which by now had a reputation for lots of fun and socialising.

Flatting continued to be the preferred option for Sally and Sue when they arrived in Aradale in the 1990s. They both went "mixed flatting;" mixed because they had male and female flatmates and were not only flatting with teachers. Liberal attitudes from the 1960s and 1970s social movements were finally trickling through to rural New Zealand and unlike the earlier generation, women could now make their own decisions about where and with whom to live without there being a public outcry. Margaret and Emma described the flat they rented from the school as "*the goldfish bowl*" because everyone who walked by, including their students, could see in:

Living in a schoolhouse was quite difficult for quite a while because kids knew where I was and you felt like you were in a "goldfish bowl"...you felt that you were on show all the time. When you were at the front that made it difficult if people were coming and staying. Everyone knew what was going on, "The teachers got someone staying there," or something like that. Yeah I found that difficult (Emma, b 1966).

Over time the women learned to ignore this kind of attention, for example, Emma found a strategy that worked: "*I got a dog and that chased them away!*" This situation contrasts dramatically with the women's experience of teaching in an urban area where they had a more private life. While the women of the "30 something" generation spoke of the freedom to be more independent as a teacher in a small 1990s community, an overriding feeling of being "watched" by others, as occurred in the 1960s, still existed. Both generations constituted narrative identities as being highly visible in their new relational settings (Somers 1994). Yet, within that context the "30 something" women experienced more freedom to be themselves rather than be shaped by the community expectations. These women constructed identities as teachers who had been constrained by societal and local community expectations. The people within this conservative rural relational setting "frowned upon" Clair and Barbara's flatting arrangements. However, with the passage of time, women in the same location two decades later were flatting with males; the feminist and Women's Liberation movements had made an impact.

⁵ Women went flatting three decades earlier in Auckland. A third year Teachers' College student, Dora Skews, and two friends were flatting in 1940 after being dissatisfied with their board. Knowing they would not get approval, the students did not notify the college as they were required to (Else 1986:44). However, this was rare as mixed flatting between university students began only in the 1960s.

4.2.3 Interaction with Parents and Students

The idea of social roles is important in everyday language, and the use of a word like "teacher" is one way of denoting a person's position in relation to other people, students and parents: "If we call someone a teacher we imply not only that this person occupies a position entailing specific demands and rewards (status) and that the person teaches (task), but also that in doing so he or she relates to students (role)" (Coser 1991:3). In the context of a small rural community that means that while teachers' actions shape their students during the working day, out of school hours another process occurs with the community shaping the identities of the teachers. The women told stories of their position in relation to students and parents that illustrate this two way process:

It wasn't hard to strike up a conversation and of course, this school bit, you get a bit of respect being a schoolteacher teaching kids and I think you are accepted because...you hold a position like that (Barbara, b 1956).

I think if they [the parents] hadn't have accepted you it would have been very difficult because they hold a lot of power (Emma, b 1966).

Being accepted by the parents was a theme that several women talked about. Parents exerted a lot of power over a new teacher, but as Emma said, it was helpful that the milkman, people in the supermarket and at the sports club were friendly to her. As a result of these people accepting and including Emma it was more likely parents and students would also accept her. Having positive interaction with parents was central to the survival of the new teacher within this community. The identities these women constructed as teachers who gained respect simply because of their teaching role in this community contributed to the extra pressures to conform as discussed in Section 4.2.1 "The Visible Rural Teacher."

Out of this expectation to conform women told stories of frustration and a new ontological self emerged. Ontological narratives that resist the status quo were central to the women maintaining identities within and away from the work environment in the rural location. For example, Sue comments at length about the conservatism in rural schools, among parents and the students, in this narrative:

*I mean there are some really nice social factors in a rural school; for the white **middle class parent** it represents **nice things** in that the influences aren't there of some other factors. They [the parents] are very conservative, which is what some people want for their children. The teachers have a tendency to be very conservative at those schools as well.... The things that aren't there are the Maori influence, rural schools [in this district] have...an **expectation** by the parents that they do not want Maori taught to their children. They do not want their children to be bicultural and that influences heavily on the children.... It is in the attitude that comes from home. They don't want their children to be addressed to some of the behavioural problems that other children are seeing in other schools.... Some of our rural schoolteachers have been there too long and have become lacklustre in their approach and need to go out there and relearn it... (Sue, b 1967).*

As a person who had taught for less than a decade, Sue held strong views about keeping her professionalism and love of the job to the fore. The identity she constructed in this narrative highlights a clash between her urban professional training and teaching experience, and the parents' resistance to acknowledge biculturalism, let alone multiculturalism, as it exists in New Zealand society. Middleton and May (1997:240-51) discuss the new multicultural approaches that filtered into teaching in the late 1960s and their subsequent development in the curriculum; included in the text is a Maori student's perspective of being schooled in a small rural town referred to as "the wild west."⁶ Louise, Barbara and Sally also talked about the importance of being professional, especially in a small community where they were often socialising with the parents of their students. Barbara described the interaction with parents as being central in her teaching role. She said, *"We sort things out together because that partnership is the most important thing because without their support you can't do anything [as a teacher]."*

4.2.4 Teaching "Second Time Round"

In this section I discuss the women who have left teaching full-time and returned after having children or a child. My uncertainty as to whether these issues should appear under the discussion of "mother" as opposed to here under "teacher" reflects the multiple identities these women have. The women are not easily partitioned off into separate identities or "labels". Their identities are complex and shift in relation to other aspects of their lives. I have chosen these subheadings for analytical purposes rather than following chronologically through the women's life cycles, but I remind the reader that the women themselves do not neatly narrate separate identities as I have presented in this thesis. Instead their identities are negotiated into the one "me".

These women are characterised by the experience of motherhood enhancing their teaching methods. Some women still identify as teachers despite having left the classroom for a number of years to raise children. For example, Barbara and Clair both returned in the 1990s to teach full-time at Aradale Primary School:

*I think now that I have been a mother I am a far better teacher. I am a **far more understanding** teacher whereas before I couldn't relate to the parents.... Well I am still a Mum first. I think it is good too for parents to see me as a Mum because it is someone that they think they can come along and talk to (Barbara, b 1956).*

*I am in a long term relieving position which will hopefully go on for two or three years...I taught all of last year and all of this year full-time. **So** that's an old lady that went back teaching! (Clair, b 1953).*

⁶ Clair also used similar language when she described arriving in Aradale in the early 1970s. She said Aradale was, *"Out in the sticks...like coming to a western town."*

The experience of being a mother combined with the wisdom and maturity that comes with aging was important to the way these two women constructed their new narrative identities. Barbara's narrative above illustrates how important being a mother was in order to relate to other parents. But as Clair highlights, the children she teaches nowadays perceive her as old:

*...I am just as old as some of their **grandmothers** when you think about it! So I am perceived as being quite old by these children, five and six year olds. So they have got grandmothers who are 45 years old.... A little girl came to school the other day and her mother said, "See I told you there would be a teacher here who taught me!" ...And one day one of the children actually said, "**She can't do that. She is old!**" I thought oh God I am getting old!* (Clair, b 1953).

While Clair considered herself young at the age of 45, this story illustrates the relational nature of aging. She says, "*I mean from where I stand 70 looks good!*" Clair is not a grandmother herself; she has two secondary school aged children and her eldest attends university, yet some of the children she teaches have grandparents her age. To a five-year-old child, an adult with nine times their life experiences is old. Age is relational to a person's own positioning in the life cycle.

Emma, Sally and Margaret each taught in a relief capacity at the time of the interviews. They varied in their identifications as a teacher and their choice over childcare. When Emma and Margaret taught they both used the crèche facilities in Aradale if their children could not stay on the farm with their father. In contrast, Sally employed a nanny when she had a block of relief teaching. Margaret compared her experiences with her sister, who returned to full-time work in the city and has a caregiver for her children. She says, "*Most women don't go back to work in a rural community, it is not seen as being **unusual**.*" However, this position conflicts with her return to work, even in a relief capacity, and that of the other "30 something" women. It appears Margaret is contradicting herself and the experiences of her peers. All seven women returned to paid employment (these issues are discussed in Section 5.3.4), and this was seen as the norm in the 1990s. Economic pressure from the rural downturn forced Louise, Clair, and Barbara into paid employment again, while Grace needed the mental stimulation away from the farm.

The "50 something" women, Grace and Louise, have both been married for over 30 years and ceased teaching in the past decade. Different narratives emerged from these women from the "30 something" generation. Grace's excerpt shows how times have changed from the mid 1960s:

*...when we were first married...I went back relieving. That was **absolutely** unheard of for a married woman to go back to work and I copped an awful lot of flak for that. ...It was a wonderful feeling going back to the classroom*

and you felt a refreshed person coming home, you didn't feel so "cabbagey" and it was lovely having the input of the children again (Grace, b 1940).

To identify as a teacher and wife challenged the public narratives that existed in the 1960s. The norm for a married woman was to cease paid employment and focus on being a good wife and then start having children. This view originates from primitive agricultural societies where "more children meant more hands to cultivate the land. Children and the female who produced them, were priceless assets" (Kay, cited in Cameron 1990:xv). Traditionally to be a productive woman in rural society was to bear children for the next generation of family farm workers and provide new members to sustain community growth. Having a career was not an option to be considered.

These teachers have constructed identities that have shifted over time, for they first identified as young women new to this rural community who felt like visible role models with no private lives. At the time of interviewing in the late 1990s, seven women were teachers for the "second time round" after the birth of their first child or children. The shifts in these identities reflected the different stages of the life cycle for each woman in addition to changes experienced over the years or decades she had lived there. To use Clair as an example, during the 1990s her new entrant students and their parents whom she had previously taught perceived her as "old." Yet during the 1970s local people considered Clair "radical" for flatting in this farming community. She has identified as a teacher in multiple ways over these three decades. This change in her teaching identities has been embedded in the historical and social context. Three to four decades of major social, economic and political change saw Clair and the other "40 to 50 something" women position themselves in many different ways. Likewise, the "30 something" women's identities as teachers have not remained static during their few years of residency. These women had greater freedom of choice between living in the teachers' hostel or going "mixed" flatting, while it was also more acceptable to pursue a teaching career in the 1990s as married women. Women of both generations identified the importance of interaction with parents and students; the more positive these relationships were in and out of school meant the women were more likely to be accepted by the community at large. This was a central theme of their identities as teachers.

4.3 Wife

Marriage to a local farmer gave most women more permanent status in the community because others saw they were not going to shift elsewhere. By marrying, the women were seen to be making a commitment by locals of Hurstfield or Aradale, which was reinforced by bearing and raising children. Women told stories of experiencing challenges as a farmer's

wife. For example, women continued teaching after marriage despite the community expectations that they carry out traditional support roles for their husbands on a full-time basis. The position of farmer's wife did not come with a job description, says Elspeth Ludemann (1992) in her newspaper article "Farmer's Bride Marries into New Career." She continues, "But it went without saying that having accepted the post I was responsible for feeding farmworkers, shearers, visiting stock agents, or orphan lambs and other strays be they two or four-legged" (Ludemann 1992). Resistance to being a stereotypical farmer's wife was paramount for all eight women interviewed. They exercised their power to continue with a career in addition to being a wife. Louise described what marriage in the late 1960s was like:

*I taught for a year after we were married, that was a little bit frowned upon. I knew some of the older more established families were saying, "Who is this young city woman? She is **working** for a year, you don't do that on a **farm**." But I mean it is acceptable now, but I would have been really lost, I would have found it quite lonely if I hadn't done that. It was a good transition having that year...(Louise, b 1941).*

Continuing with her career was a choice, rather than an economic necessity at first. Louise did not marry Steve for the security of a farming life. Her career was important for her own identity and Steve respected that fact.

Three decades after Louise's experience Margaret highlights that she thought solely in terms of advancing her career before she met her prospective husband earlier in the 1990s. This changed after meeting Simon; Margaret was willing to stay in Aradale at the expense of her career:

I never thought of myself as staying anywhere too long because until I got married I was thinking in terms of progressing in my career. But by the end of a couple of years I had known Simon...I knew that I wanted to marry him and I wasn't in a great hurry. Although I did start threatening to apply for other jobs to get him to marry me! No it wasn't quite that bad but we always joke about it being like that (Margaret, b 1966).

Continuing with a career was important to the women of both generations after getting married, and people were more accepting of married women working in the 1990s than they were in the 1960s. Three decades ago the breadwinner model of males receiving a wage to support the man, wife and three children to a fair and reasonable standard of comfort still pervaded (Kivell 1995:12) as a public narrative. Other major changes in society, like the "sexual revolution" of the 1960s, meant attitudes freed up for people who chose to live together in de facto relationships.

4.3.1 "Living Together" Before Marriage

Three of the women interviewed, Clair, Emma and Sue, lived with their partners before marriage. For Clair, in the 1970s, this embarrassed her parents and caused problems with her prospective parents-in-law living locally:

*In fact before we actually got engaged **both** our parents were asking us when the hell we were going to get married because I think it was just causing them both a lot of problems. Eugene [father-in-law] never saw Geoff when he wanted him at home to work with him and my parents were well aware of how we were living down here and they really didn't want somebody in [the city] to know I was doing this so they just wanted me married **fast!*** (Clair, b 1953).

Compared to Clair's experience, there was more openness and acceptance in the 1990s that people lived together outside of marriage. However, Emma still commented on the importance of keeping the fact quiet at first to give her and Ben some privacy with their new relationship:

...we lived together for a year and then got married...I think his parents found it difficult to start with, but...because we were living in the country people didn't really know for a long time. It was when one of my students said "I saw your car coming out of so and so's place early this morning Miss Bates..." (Emma, b 1966).

Because Emma moved in with her partner over the holidays they had privacy until school started two months later. A sense of openness was emerging despite the attitudes of rural dwellers being more conservative than their urban counterparts when people deviate from the norm, or public narrative, to use Somers' framework. The public narrative involves an engagement being announced before marriage, and only after the marriage ceremony is cohabitation acceptable in the eyes of the church and the wider community. In the most orthodox Greek situations, after marriage the bride's self is remade in the image of her husband's family (Cohen 1994:84). While marriage in rural New Zealand does not have such extreme connotations, historically the expectation and practice was that married women left their own identity behind, becoming "somebody's Mrs," a title denoting she was now a married woman.

Research two decades ago in an Australian rural village found that marriage was seen as the ultimate aim for women (Poiner 1979:59). These attitudes, or public narratives, still pervade in rural communities like Aradale and Hurstfield. Sue illustrates the point that marriage is a criterion for being "officially" welcomed locally.⁷ These people did not think it appropriate to welcome Sue while she was living with her partner, but when she became a married woman this changed: *"I actually found out by word of mouth that my name was being mentioned by the welcoming committee at the next welcoming."* Sue was "so

⁷ Periodically new residents are officially welcomed in a social function at the Hurstfield Hall that is organised by the welcoming committee of the hall made up of "established" local people.

annoyed" she phoned the two respective people and advised them she would not be attending. She also says:

*...there are other people in the community who have never been welcomed who have lived here longer than me. But because of their marital status, the person is actually living with a farmer in the Hurstfield community, because they are not married [they have never been welcomed]. And yet these people have chosen to live the rest of their lives together and have certainly let it be known that their **bonds** are permanent, but they are still not welcomed (Sue, b 1967).*

While such attitudes are slowly changing, the family farm has been based on patriarchal authority (Sachs 1983:64-74), with the male head of the household controlling his wife and children. Historically that was accepted behaviour, but since the Women's Liberation movement and the second wave of feminism, the gendered social relations that have pervaded in our society have been challenged. Women now demand more equal partnerships within marriage or choose alternatives. However, living in de facto relationships is still "relatively" new for some members of rural society. Yet Clair, Emma and Sue have all narrated identities that resisted being narrowly defined by their relationship status.

4.3.2 Keeping My Own Name or Taking My Husband's?

Two of the "30 something" women, Sally and Sue, kept their own family names when they married, whereas the other six women interviewed took their husband's family name.⁸ Historically that was normal behaviour in rural and urban society, but today marriage or partnerships are viewed more liberally in urban settings, with a larger proportion of women keeping their own family names. Margaret states:

...rural communities tend to be a lot more conservative and people still comment on people that keep their names but I don't think they are quite as negative as they used to be. ...In the city it is not really an issue at all. In fact to a certain extent for some people it is an issue if you change your name because it is not the thing you do (Margaret, b 1966).

Sally says, "I wonder if I had been married and been in the city would I still be a Frenchington now, and I think I would be. ...You are **born** with that name and that sense of identity is still there." Cameron (1990:34) states that when children are born into a family it is assumed that they belong; their name symbolises belonging and legitimacy. Sally still has a sense of belonging with her family of origin and kept her own name when she married to signify that identity.

⁸ I encountered problems trying to make telephone contact with some women in this research because most were listed in the telephone book under their husband's name. These women were effectively invisible in this public document, in terms of "gender identity", to an "outsider" with no local knowledge to whom they were married.

Until recently a married woman always took the title Mrs without considering being Ms and keeping her own family name. Sally experienced some parental disapproval for not taking her husband's name; however, she changed it several years later. She shared these stories:

When I married I kept my name at Hurstfield Primary School. I decided I would stay as Miss Frenchington, Rosemary [the principal] who I worked with had kept her name and I was quite happy to do that. I had some parents who would send me a note...to Mrs Collinswood. That was their way of saying, "Look you have married a Collinswood, so be a Collinswood" and so I remained as Frenchington. When I applied for the job at [a school in Southview] on my CV I had Collinswood as well as Frenchington. And unfortunately before I had the chance to say to them, I prefer in teaching to keep my maiden name they announced that they had appointed a Sally Collinswood to the job.... But at the same time Dave and I were buying this farm off his parents and I was in two minds, do I stay Frenchington, do I stay Collinswood? I found that I was a bit neither/nor and...it seemed to be a lot more practical [to take my husband's name] when we were doing all the legal business, you know it started to get quite tricky....

I suppose when you give your name to something, like at the butcher you are picking up an order for Collinswood and they say, "Oh you're Graham's daughter?" and you say, "Daughter-in-law." Or in other instances people say, "Oh you're Faye's daughter?" "No daughter-in-law," so you become the Collinswood. "Oh which Collinswood are you?" they say. "Which family of Collinswood's are you?" So sometimes there is an advantage to having a name that is known in the community (Sally, b 1963).

Despite changing her name to Collinswood when entering the farm partnership with her husband Sally uses both names; Frenchington appears on her Visa card and she has also published under that name. The identities she narrates include using two different names. By incorporating time, space and relationality as core concepts (Somers and Gibson 1994:41) Sally is able to sustain these multiple identities. Over time she shifts between using different family names, just as in the school and farm relational settings Sally is known as Collinswood while to her sisters she is still a Frenchington. She also negotiates these identities in different spaces, using her husband's name in the local community while shopping, but retaining the identity she has had since birth on her Visa cards.

Sue has experienced resistance locally as a result of keeping her own name after marriage. She made the "tongue in cheek" comment, "**Now as Mrs Clausen I am part of the Hurstfield community.**" Her official name on the marriage certificate, when signing cheques and similar documents is Sue Edwards Clausen. Sue uses the title Ms and never Mrs. In the eyes of the community her status as a married woman was more acceptable, even if she had not reverted to using her husband's name totally. The community was now ready to welcome her officially at a Hurstfield function and she got a letter from the church. Sue narrated one "identity" in this rural community and elsewhere via her family name, and admitted to often calling herself simply Sue Edwards, especially when teaching. This name

has remained the same over time and space despite her now being a married woman. Whatever relational setting she is in, Sue uses the same name.

While Emma is unsure if her status within the community altered after marriage, she talked positively about changing her name. She said, *"It's easier with businesses because it is a known name, now I am known as Emma Hanson, and you just say, 'Put it on the account!'"* Once Emma identified with the Hanson family, those in the rural community also placed her as part of the extended Hanson family. This is a similar experience to Sally's in the above narrative. The whole naming debate is tied into wider implications of landholdings, ownership, and succession issues relevant to family farming. "Men of course carry the family name, and it is principally men who inherit and hopefully increase the [land]holding" (Poiner 1979:61). As a result, women are discriminated against. A Ministry of Agriculture study found that rural women experienced more difficulty than urban women obtaining finance due to the more conservative attitudes of banks ("Rural Women" 1992). There is still a widely held belief that a woman's place is in her home.

4.3.3 "Hub of the Wheel" and Homemaker

Women are central to the running of a farm in Grace's opinion. She described her position as a farmer's wife with the analogy of a wheel on several occasions. Grace stated, *"The women on a farm are the **hub of the wheel** and if you are not functioning well, the wheel just starts falling apart."* Later she continued:

*Your home has got to be a place where you feel comfortable in and that you like living in. And I think the home in a country situation has to be a **nice place** because it is really the **hub** of the whole farming operation and if it, the home isn't functioning **well** then the wheels tend to crumble a bit round the middle (Grace, b 1940).*

Grace identified strongly with being a homemaker and took pride in the smooth running of the home, as that was central to the smooth operation of the farm. Janet Finch stated that when a woman marries "she marries not only a man but also she marries his job, and from that point onward will live out her life in the context of the job she has married" (James 1987:103). That has been true of farming because the home shares the same place as the business, that is, you live on the productive unit. Ludemann (1992) described "the constant stream of phone calls to deal with, messages to run and the other minor but time-consuming tasks that fall to your lot when you marry someone who lives on the job." This is seldom the case for urban brides because most people travel elsewhere in the town or city for employment, unless they run a home based business.

Part of living in the country for Grace was having interests that used her hands and could be done at home. She attended night-classes in Southview to pursue some creative interests; examples of her work were scattered around the walls. Louise also discussed homemaking without being prompted:

Probably homemaking is something that is still strong in rural areas although it has broken down a little with women having to go out to work after the downturn. I was one of those too because I was busy full-time trying to make extra money (Louise, b 1941).

When Louise was at home full-time she negotiated with her husband the roles they were each going to have. She admits that there was a clear division of labour with her based in the house, but she was happy with that arrangement in the 1970s. With the rural downturn Louise acknowledged that her primary role shifted from being a support person at home for her husband and family to bringing in much needed money. The economic pressure to return to work meant that she was negotiating an identity as a teacher again, in addition to being a wife, mother, an active community member, and taking in extra paid employment like knitting.

The homemaking theme spans both generations. The rural women Sue knows have "*natural skills at being a homemaker, whether they like it or not.*" Sue raised the importance of home as a physical location with a "*patch of dirt...my garden, my house.*" She also spoke symbolically of home being a space based on her own internal concept, meaning that home could shift over time and space, incorporating different relational settings:

...there is a song by Paul Young, and home is where I lay my hat and that is it. There are things that we carry with us that when we sit down wherever we are, you will make a home because you have got some things with you and they are internal and sometimes they are external. But what you internally place on the place you are in makes it home and that is the way that I view my world. If Murray and I are here for life then this will be my home but there will be other places that are home as well (Sue, b 1967).

She said the "*woman is supposed to hold the household together*" in a rural community. This statement reinforces the historic public narrative that women belong in the private sphere (Cox and James 1987:21-2). Sue admitted she had interests "*conducive to the country way of life because I like sewing.*"

Sue also acknowledged women did not have the same infrastructures as the men did with farming unless they have children and go to Plunket or similar organisations. Sue's comment illustrated the gendered experience of newcomers living on family farms. These women are "situated within a wider kinship network in which patrilineage structures the practices through which the ownership of property is vested in the hands of men and reproduced generationally along the lines of male filiation" (Whatmore 1991:73). The men

have established networks with their neighbours because they grew up socialising with these people through school, church, sport, and other community involvements. They have knowledge, often going back generations, of local family and district history, which gives them a strong identity based on the place and their peers. Margaret, who has children, said:

*Simon knows our neighbours **very well** and has known them for years. I don't **actually** know what some of them look like. Well I have **seen** them all but I don't know them very well and I haven't been to any of their houses, but I would like to think that that would change (Margaret, b 1966).*

This theme that women lacked the infrastructures of their husbands was echoed by three of the "30 something" women. Over time the stories they tell may change, as they too become more a part of the community life as wives, mothers and community members.

Another attribute of being a good wife and homemaker incorporated involvement with the annual A & P Show in Aradale for women of both generations. This was the one day that the town came to the country. One farmer described Canterbury's A & P Show as melding town and country, becoming an educational experience for city dwellers (Leslie 1999:2). However, there was a generational distinction because the stories told by the "40 to 50 something" women were more serious (refer to Grace and Barbara's life histories in Chapter Two) than told by the "30 something" generation. The "50 something" Louise entered knitting and baking in the Aradale A & P Show for the first 20 years of her married life. When her children were old enough she encouraged her sons to enter the woodwork and Lego sections while her daughter entered baking and flowers. This story illustrates the gendered characteristics of what was "acceptable" for boys and girls to enter in the A & P Show 10 to 20 years ago (this story also epitomises much of my own upbringing in the 1970s and 1980s).

The "30 something" women (Sally, Emma and Sue) volunteered more humorous accounts of the A & P Show. These 1990s women were not taking this annual event seriously like the previous generation. Sally, having rejected expectations that she should take on her husband's name after marriage, was now mocking the role of being a wonderful wife who enters food, produce and other handiwork in the local A & P Show. She roared with laughter when telling this story:

*This year, as a joke, I entered my muffins in the Aradale A & P Show, and I entered under Mrs Dave Collinswood to really take the "Mickey". So that was a bit of a laugh amongst friends...[who] come down for the weekend from [the city] because they just think that the Aradale A & P Show is fascinating, especially the produce tent. It is just **great**; you know the crochet work and that stuff (Sally, b 1963).*

While Sue also laughed about her involvement in the A & P Show there was a more serious side to her story as she also supported her husband:

*...[I] helped at the A & P Show and that is not something I would normally do whatsoever. I mean, I have been in the preserves section and couldn't make jam if I wanted to! But for me I said straight up to Murray, "Do you want to be on the A & P Society one day?" And he said, "Oh it is something that I wouldn't mind doing," and thus if it is a goal for him I will be there to support him. And if that means I do something now and help out once a year and it's quite entertaining and I can ring friends and say, "**Guess** what I did today?" Then I'll do it. If it means that if it helps [Murray] because in helping him it means I am helping us (Sue, b 1967).*

These women negotiate the conflicting roles of being a "good wife" while maintaining their own autonomy in this 1990s rural community. For example, Sue supported her husband who intends being further involved in the A & P Association but she, and Sally, also had a good laugh at the gendered nature of the farming community of which they are now a part. There are many levels at which they engage with this "Godzone institution" (McDougall 1992:11), or public narrative, of the A & P Show.

Being a farmer's wife included many different roles for these women. The "40 to 50 something" generation were expected to treat the role of wife as a full-time job and give up paid employment; however, Grace, Louise, Clair and Barbara continued teaching prior to the birth of their first child. Women of both generations constructed narrative identities that combined being a teacher and a wife, irrespective of what decade they married. However, it is important to note that the women in the 1960s experienced more resistance from long-standing locals when they chose not to be a "stereotypical farmer's wife" than women encountered during the 1990s. Living arrangements became more liberal over time and were reflected in the stories told by Clair, Emma and Sue, who lived with their partners before marriage. Naming was a generation specific issue with two of the "30 something" women keeping their own family names after marriage; Sally and Sue had multiple identities using their own, their husband's or a combination of names which shifted in different contexts. These stories were embedded in the late twentieth century culture that resulted from the second wave of feminism, and other social movements. In contrast, the "homemaker" was a major theme for wives of both generations.

4.4 Mother

All seven women who were mothers said this was the biggest change in their identities and how they related with others. Little and Austin (1996:110) state that the "rural idyll" supports traditional gender relations by prioritising women's mothering role and making it central within the community. While Herman Schmalenbach (1961:343) stated "mother and child were construed to be in communion, because they constituted community." Being a mother

was central to the identities that these seven women narrated. Clair described what motherhood meant to her:

You have these wondrous, just miracle creatures that you just can't believe are possible and I am sure, I can't explain because I don't think there are words to explain it but what they do to your life is totally incredible. And the force they have on you is, well you can't stop it. There is nothing you can do that will alter it. The power they have over you is total, simply because they are your children and so you just set out to make their life as good and as full and as satisfying for them as you can. So that has been a huge influence in my life...my children and my husband are without doubt the greatest force in my life (Clair, b 1953).

The women all ceased full-time employment as a teacher prior to the birth of their first child. The "40 to 50 something" generation of women returned to the paid workforce only after their children were at school. This contrasts with the "30 something" generation; all three women with pre-school children and babies did some form of relief teaching as discussed in Section 4.2.4. Between these two generations there has been an attitudinal shift, accepting that mothers can remain in the workforce, and they have done so in increasing numbers (Kedgley 1996:308). Of the 147,801 New Zealand women with pre-school children, 51.18 per cent work either part-time or full-time; part-timers are more numerous than full-timers ("NZ Working Mums" 1999). The provision of improved childcare facilities has aided mothers returning to the workforce. The rural town of Aradale, for example, has had a crèche since the mid 1980s.

4.4.1 The Pressure to be a Mother and the Pleasure of Family

Motherhood was central to these women's lives. However, they were faced with conflicting public narratives, between myths and traditions glorifying the role of mother that have pervaded over time, and the actual reality of mothering in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and/or 1990s.⁹ Both "50 something" women felt pressure to have children in the 1960s, but they initially continued teaching. Louise waited to become a mother on purpose because she had a younger husband. She felt pressured by community expectations as a result. It is assumed that all women are capable of bearing children, but an estimated 10 per cent of New Zealanders have difficulty getting pregnant and five per cent never do (Cameron 1990:46), while others choose to remain childfree (see the next paragraph). The "30 something" Sally also felt pressured by her father-in-law to become a mother once she was married, but she took a career promotion before the birth of her first child. Sally described

⁹ As there was not sufficient time or space to do justice to this theme refer to Sue Kedgley's (1996) *Mum's the Word: The Untold Story of Motherhood in New Zealand*, for a comprehensive account of motherhood over the twentieth century. See also Jan Cameron's (1990) *Why Have Children?* that outlines her New Zealand research during the 1980s; Jane and James Ritchie's (1978) *Growing Up in New Zealand*, which discusses parenting and motherhood in the late 1970s; and Nancy Chodorow's (1978) psychoanalytic and sociological analysis of mothering.

the reaction of her father-in-law: "*When I got my job in Southview he congratulated me but told me that he would like to be a grandfather.*" This man, aged 75, spoke of "*that career business*" in a way that implied Sally was not being a "proper" wife by continuing with paid work. In "his day" this kind of behaviour would not be acceptable. While some urban women are choosing to be childfree, that option is less appealing "among rural families, for much community life is structured around children" (Smith 1991:90).

Like Sally, Sue was very happy with her career, but unlike the other women interviewed, Sue is not sure that she wants to have a family in the future. Sue and her husband fit into the common stereotype, or public narrative, of couples who have chosen to remain childless; "they are professionally educated, relatively affluent and the wife has a 'career' rather than a 'job'" (Cameron 1990:85). If Sue ever has children she envisages working in some capacity as a teacher and/or incorporating further educational training rather than being a full-time mother. Sue stated:

I actually see children in this community as a way of removing you from this community. I think it keeps the women at home, when I go to the [sports] club, all I ever see are the males in this district. Women who I have previously seen at [another sport] are now at home full-time (Sue, b 1967).

Her observations highlight the conflicting roles for rural women who are mothers. While mothering is central to community life (Little and Austin 1996) on one level, if women are full-time mothers without shared parenting with their partners, they are removed from community life unless they get involved in child related groups. Childless women, like Sue, construct their identities differently from those who are mothers because they have greater freedom in their lifestyles without the constraints that motherhood imposes.

Most women described the responsibilities of parenting as not always easy on the farm. Barbara, Clair and Louise talked of taking their parenting responsibilities seriously and did not like giving their children to others to take care of. All spoke of isolation as a stay at home mother. Clair in particular compared the need to travel by car in rural areas rather than walking with a pram or children on bikes as her mother had done in the city. Margaret described feeling isolated only on bad days with her children. Another woman found the Plunket Nurse took on a dual role rather than always being there to help. She found her a threat at times and felt she did not always measure up as being a "good mother". Sue Kedgley states:

Our society idealises motherhood as an institution, but takes mothers for granted and defines the work they do, giving birth to and raising the next generation of New Zealanders, as unproductive (and therefore unpaid), routine, boring and unfulfilling. Yet at the same time as society denigrates the work mothers do and gives mothers very little, if any, support, it holds them personally responsible for the emotional and physical welfare of their

children and blames and scapegoats them if anything goes wrong (Kedgley 1996:337).

These mixed messages are difficult for women to negotiate, but they do because those interviewed also found pleasure in being a mother, as Clair stated in her narrative opening Section 4.4: *"The power they have over you is total, simply because they are your children."* All seven mothers constructed identities through their narratives that illustrated they also found pleasure in their mothering role. It was possible for them to shift between the highs and lows of being a mother. These identities changed over time through their life cycle and were impacted on by outside forces like the rural downturn and a return to paid employment. The majority of these women discussed the pressure they encountered while mothering the next generation of locals.

For Margaret the roles of becoming a farmer's wife and a mother coincided because she and her husband moved to the Hurstfield farm a month before their first child was born:

*I would say marrying into this family has always seemed that I could do anything I wanted to do and there wouldn't be any negative feeling. I happened to have my **first child** at the same time, within a month, of moving here. So I became a full-time farmer's wife...at the same time I became a **mother** and so in terms of cooking the meals, cooking for shearers and all that sort of stuff I felt like I fitted in and I was ready to do that (Margaret, b 1966).*

For many women it was difficult to make a distinction between wife and mother. The social construction of both identities is intertwined in what Bev James and Kay Saville-Smith (1989:31-46) term the "cult of domesticity." Marriage to a local meant making a commitment to Hurstfield or Aradale life, which was further reinforced by bearing, raising and nurturing children.

When I asked the question, *"What is the most important thing/aspect in your life?"* the unanimous response from seven women was their family and/or children. Family was central to the cultural constructions of rurality for women studied in the south west of England also (Little and Austin 1996:105). Kinship relationships in our western society have been based on the nuclear family: the domestic unit of a woman and man in a stable relationship with dependent children (Bilton *et al.* 1985:255). While family units are becoming more diverse in society, to include sole parent families, same-sex parent families, and parents in de-facto relationships, the traditional nuclear family in rural communities remains the norm, or the public narrative, as indicated by Ponter's (1996:24) 1989 study of rural women.

4.4.2 Sharing Parental Responsibilities with a Husband on the Farm

All the "30 something" mothers commented on their farming lifestyle, with its associated environment of open spaces, access to animals, and regular contact with their husbands, as being an ideal place to raise children. Sally contrasted her experience with urban friends who were alone with their children. She says, "*It is nice being married to someone that you see during the day, I think it is a real advantage.*" As a mother on a farm Sally appreciated that her children could play inside and outside, so the weather did not have as much of an impact as it would if she lived in the city. The farm was a good place for children to grow up, and another historically entrenched public narrative. Jones (1997) contests the existence of a "country childhood idyll" but Sally and Margaret both told stories that highlight the benefits of sharing parenting on the farm with their husbands:

*I have Dave here during the day and especially with the children he makes a point of coming in now for morning and afternoon teas. Liz goes out with him at least once a day just out on the motorbike or just in the truck with him to check the sheep. ...I don't feel the days are **long**. Whereas some friends in [town do], especially when we had wet weather [and] they...were inside **all day** with the children. And the husband is not coming home until six, away about seven or eight [am] and home again about five or six [pm] and they are at home with their child or children all day. I think I would find that really hard and in some ways I would feel **more isolated** in that situation than what I do here. And as I say, just little things like the bed times for their children are a lot later than what we would have for Liz and Andy, just so that the fathers can see them and have time with their children. And even things like during a wet week Dave still took Liz down to a silo one day with her broom so she could sweep it with him. It is things like that for me which are really nice, it's not like she is in my hair, she has got something else to keep her entertained for half an hour or an hour is good (Sally, b 1963).*

Raising the children in a relational setting in which they can see their father on a regular basis was important for these "30 something" women. They acknowledged the uniqueness of their rural lifestyle in both these narratives. Margaret reiterates Sally:

*I always know that my life is quite different **having** my husband around all the time or popping in every now and then or taking my children away. Or Paul being able to wander out and see what his father is doing, to see if he is around. Whereas, if I was in a...house in town where my husband went off to work at half past seven in the morning and then came home at half past five at night I think I would probably rely more on my neighbours (Margaret, b 1966).*

Both these women construct identities which acknowledge shared parenting with their husbands through the working day. For the majority of urban parents whose partners work in different locations from their home base this would not be possible. Sally and Margaret did not feel isolated on the farm as mothers, which is contrary to their perception that urban parents assume it must be a lonely time with no close neighbours. As Margaret stated, she did not need to rely on her neighbours because her husband was usually nearby. The social expectations re parenting have changed since the 1960s, and the stories these

young mothers told in the 1990s were not available to their "40 to 50 something" peers. Fathers are now expected to participate actively in their child or children's upbringing, whereas two or three decades ago men were still supposed to provide financially for their family by working in the public sphere rather than taking a more equal role in the private sphere of the home (Ritchie 1978).

Seven women constituted narrative identities as mothers; these included initially rejecting, but later accepting, the idea that a "proper wife" had children. They also discussed the pressures to be a "good mother," for example, who went to Plunket, in their ontological narratives. The women told stories of different mothering identities as they negotiated the pressure to conform to wider community and societal expectations, and the pleasures that their role encompassed. In terms of "identity", becoming a mother was the biggest change in the lives of all seven women who were parents because they ceased teaching, even if only short-term for the "30 something" generation. Temporal change between the 1960s and 1990s meant that Sally and Margaret could now enjoy shared parenting with their husbands on the farm.

4.5 Farmer

Of the 21 dairy-farming women Margaret Begg (1990) interviewed, ranging in age from "20 something" to their late 50s, five women were teachers. She says:

In terms of self-identification, most of the younger farm women identify with the terms "farm wife" or "farmer" while some still identify with traditional women's roles within the family such as "wife," "homemaker," or "housewife," although this identification is rapidly changing. During discussions women felt that "farmer" was an occupational label for men and that this was reinforced by radio interviewers using male gender pronouns such as "him" and "he" when referring to farmers (Begg 1990:73).

Similar identifications were evident in my research conducted over a decade after Begg's. We both used a similar age range of women yet interviewed in different geographic regions of New Zealand. I was based on Canterbury mixed farms while Begg was on Waikato dairy farms. The identity of farmer was claimed overtly by only two of the eight women that I interviewed, Emma (b 1966) and Barbara (b 1956). The other women talked of being in farming partnerships of some sort with their husbands, but did not see themselves as farmers in their own right.

4.5.1 Strategic Choices to be a Farmer versus Prevailing Attitudes

The "30 something" Emma was the only woman who overtly identified herself as a farmer. In fact, she strategically chose to teach in a rural location because she wanted to become a

farmer and thought her best option was to marry a farmer rather than buying her own land. Emma enjoyed her formative years living on farms: *"I always wanted to get back... [to the country and] I thought I could by going teaching in a rural community and maybe meeting a rural farmer and settling and it worked!"* Emma narrated multiple identities, but distinguished between the public and private facets of these: *"I am a wife, a mother, and a farmer and a teacher. Most people don't know about the farming bit but they know about the rest."* We discussed how being a wife, mother and teacher were public roles that people saw her undertake in the community. Emma was seen as Ben's wife, Mrs Hanson; a mother to Wayne and Howard; or a teacher in front of a classroom of students. When she is farming, however, Emma says, *"It is private,"* suggesting that people do not see her at home working on the farm. She gave the example of getting different reactions when seen in her teaching clothes versus her farm clothes:

Like going to crèche they see me as the teacher because I am usually dropping Wayne off when I go to teach. People say, "Oh you've been teaching today or have you been doing this?" But if I go in in my farm clothes they don't say, "Have you been farming today?" (Emma, b 1966).

Over more recent generations the role of farm women has become more visible within rural communities. However, although social attitudes are changing with farm women being increasingly acknowledged, the community may still be reluctant to accept women farmers (McCrostie Little and Taylor 1997:19).

Both "40 something" women did not pursue their original career choices in the late 1960s, or early 1970s because their fathers advised against it. Barbara's ideal was to be *"a land-girl but I had two brothers and so Dad said no way was I being a land-girl."* Instead she pursued her second option. So, like Emma, Barbara strategically decided, *"I always wanted to be a teacher...so teaching was a way of getting back into the country areas."* Her farming and teaching identities were of equal importance to Barbara and she negotiated these selves to be on the farm or at school for their respective busy periods. Barbara's story parallels Clair's story. Clair, whose father was also influential, wanted to work in her father's business but he was against that two to three decades ago. But as Clair said, there has certainly been a shift in male attitudes towards women being able to enter farming or go into any kind of business. Her father's attitude has also shifted:

*I guess it is a mind set thing again, you know these men 25-30 years ago [thought] daughters didn't do that sort of thing. Can you imagine saying to your father 25-30 years ago, "Dad I am going to take over your farm." He would have thought you were **nuts**, he wouldn't have even considered it, just like my father didn't consider me taking over this company **but today** if a daughter said to her father, "I want to take over the farm." **"Fine, do it, why not?"** But in those days, that was just too hard, it was just not considered to be the mould; it was not what girls did. So really women have come a long way; women **have come** a long way (Clair, b 1953).*

The temporal aspect of these stories is important. In the 1990s Emma could be a farmer. That was not an option for Barbara two or three decades earlier because she was a female. Likewise, for Clair, it was not considered an option for her to work at, let alone manage, her father's company. Today she narrates different identities and knows the career options for her daughter are more diverse. The patriarchal public narratives that farming (and businesses) were operating under are changing. Since the second wave of feminism, social relations are becoming more egalitarian as women of all ages are taking on new career and business challenges.

In the 1990s there was still a multitude of stories being told depending on the temporal and spatial background of the teller. Grace believed in women's rights "to a degree" and qualified that by saying:

*I don't agree with women doing books and writing cheques because I believe that is man's business and they have to **know** what is going on and they have got to be in **control**. I don't do that, that is their business (Grace, b 1940).*

Yet Grace proudly speaks of how when they were first farming she thought it would be a good idea to have signing rights for cheques in case her husband was ever unable to sign. She recalls, "*That was **really radical** at that time [late 1960s or early 1970s] and I was questioned about that but we stuck to it...**women** have got those rights now.*" She has resisted many of the gendered norms that existed in the 1960s but is still happy for her husband, as head of the household, as the farmer, to control the finances. While Grace did not call herself a feminist, being a young adult during the rise of the Women's Liberation movement and associated social upheaval as discussed in Section 2.2 "Setting the Context" would have influenced her outlook. Smith (1991:77) states that it was common for women of this and other generations not to identify with feminism, for fear of being labelled an "unacceptable radical," yet they upheld women's rights in their day to day lives. These women narrated identities that changed over time. In the 1990s Emma identified as a farmer, wife, mother, and teacher, while Barbara shifts between being a teacher during school hours and negotiates being a farmer around her paid work so that she can spend more time farming during the busy periods. While Clair and Grace did not identify as farmers, they have seen and been part of actively working for change in their own immediate lives which has contributed towards more equal opportunities for women. The example of Grace getting signing rights for their farm chequebook was radical in the 1960s/1970s era, but it is now an accepted reality for the "30 something" women.

4.5.2 Changes in Attitudes: From Wife to Partnership

Attitudes have changed over the years as to what is expected of a farmer's wife. Sally recalled how horrified her father-in-law, Graham, was when she went on holiday with her extended family at the busiest time of the farming year:

*Graham said to Faye, "You might have done a few things in our marriage but you never **abandoned** me during harvest!" He saw that as just terrible that I would leave the farm during harvest, he couldn't relate to that at all and I mean over the years I have become more relaxed about it now (Sally, b 1963).*

In the 1990s the identity of a farmer's wife was being traded for that of a more equal partnership. Marriage for women on farms has been an intimate relationship involving communication and companionship as well as being a partnership with a certain degree of independence (Begg 1990:56). This contrasts with the narrower role of "farmer's wife" as discussed in Section 4.3. The "30 something" Sue says:

Some people see me as quite individualistic and yet when I am at home I am really a passive supporter of Murray...if you are competing with your partner, you are not going to work in a farming environment (Sue, b 1967).

The goal of partnership is something that women over the last few decades have striven for in their personal life and in the business of farming. In the United States a strong interdependence between men and women on the "family farm is upheld as the natural and ideal means of producing agricultural goods" (Sachs 1983:74). The women of Aradale and Hurstfield view marriage similarly. Clair, Sally, Margaret, and Emma all talked of the attraction of being involved in their husband's work. Clair sums up these views by saying:

*I know that I wanted a marriage that I was part of what we were doing. I **wanted** to be part of the **business**. I wanted to be part of the decision making and the day-to-day running of it. I wanted to know what was happening with it and try and help and contribute to it (Clair, b 1953).*

Recent New Zealand research found that farm women in the late 1990s expected to take on decision making roles in their farm business, rather than be a "sounding board" (McCrostie Little and Taylor 1997:19). Farming partnerships that two "30 something" women had with their husband's supported these findings. Sally was in a 50/50 partnership with her husband while Emma was in a 33/66 partnership that would be moving towards an equal ownership over time. The "40 something" Clair talked of the farm being in her husband's name but she knew it was an equal partnership because of the Matrimonial Property Act.

From the position of farmer's wife that was the norm in the 1960s a new identity of farmer has emerged. Women of the "40 something" and "30 something" generations are breaking down the public narratives, which supported traditional gender roles for women as housewives, homemakers and mothers while the men, were the farmers. Another shift over time with women now identifying as farm partners with equal rights in the business.

4.6 Conclusion

Ontological narratives reflect that identities are not static and change over time. Identities cannot be neatly divided into the subheadings that I have used for this analysis; they change from day to day and over a lifetime. For example, Grace says, *"I don't change from one thing, from one minute to the next, I'm me and I'm the same day in and day out."* In the next conversation she comments about her life, *"It has been a period of really big change from women being sort of down under to women being more assertive and coming through and you learn that."* Her interview overtly reflects that Grace has not personally changed; yet she also stated that women have asserted themselves in general. By stating *"you learn that"* Grace is covertly including herself as one of those women who has faced change. These shifting narratives show Grace negotiating change in her lifetime and reinforcing her strength as a woman who asserts herself to get her needs met as well as a woman who defers to her husband. She talked about her belief in equal rights for women yet also expressed her belief that men should hold ultimate control when making financial decisions on the farm. At the same time Grace and other women interviewed resisted conservative rural public narratives and forced change to take place. Yet, they also colluded with other public narratives that kept the status quo.

These women negotiate identities for themselves that change over time and in different places; *"me"* can mean so many things in relation to the setting. *"Me"* is not a fixed essential person, while they are each unique women the multiple roles they take on also mean they can have multiple identities. Let the women themselves conclude how they identify themselves:

I am me. There is nobody else like me, I guess that makes me unique...a mother, a wife and a teacher and I hope a good friend to a lot of people. Yeah that is it really (Clair, b 1953).

Family would be number one and I try to juggle the farming and the teaching because...I love being out and mothering up ewes, I really do enjoy getting out on the farm so I try and keep a balance between school and so I can still help Fred. I love going out there with him but it is hard at times. Sometimes I have to put priority on school depending on what's coming up, end of year reports...and then sometimes the farm takes preference. Like if it is lambing time then I won't stay at school, I will come home after I have finished and perhaps at night time I will mark books.... Yeah family is definitely first and then the farming and school is probably pretty close together (Barbara, b 1956).

I see myself as...Dave's wife and mother of Andy and Liz and a local teacher in the area. ...I don't see myself as a local...I mean I am local in that I live here but I wasn't born here. But that is a tricky one to answer, I see myself as me... (Sally, b 1963).

*I'm a mad farmer's wife! ...I get out and I do things with my husband, I drive the tractor, I lamb the ewes, I do that sort of thing. I'm a **teacher** by sorts, I suppose, I don't know if people still see me as that [I do only relief work now].... I think they see me as Ben's wife, Wayne's mother, farm partner... (Emma, b 1966).*

Teacher, wife, mother, and to a lesser extent farmer, were the most common identities that these women used to describe themselves. These identities occurred together, shifted from one to another over time, or were even in conflict with one another. The narratives shared by these women tell of multiple identities, as the above four excerpts illustrate. The women interviewed negotiate their identities as they move from one role to another during the day, for example, during school hours they are the teacher, but then they return home to be wife and mother, while Emma and Barbara also balance their commitments around work as a farmer. To an outsider these identities may seem contradictory, but for the women themselves the many roles and positions they undertake are simply a part of living their everyday lives. The professional qualifications and the experiences these women hold as teachers; combined with their marital status as wives; family commitments as mothers and their farming responsibilities were central in forming the identities of these women. Yet the wider community context has also been of importance.

In Chapter Five I will explore the wider influences these rural communities have had on the women as they adjust to a new social landscape. I discuss the social relationships the women have with their extended families, the dynamics of becoming a community member, whether it is possible to ever achieve local or insider status and the sense of belonging, or perhaps exclusion, these women experience. The identities of Grace, Louise, Clair and Barbara are embedded in the Aradale and/or Hurstfield communities because they have lived there for over two or three decades and become accepted over time. For Sally, Margaret, Emma and Sue the place they have resided in for under a decade has different connotations, but their narratives of rural life are still paramount in the identities they construct.

CHAPTER FIVE

REFLECTIONS ON "COMMUNITY" LIFE

Men and women's perceptions of locality and community may differ according to their experience of domestic and paid work, kin and friendship networks, participation in voluntary associations, and the power relationships within local systems of social stratification and differentiation (Pearson 1994:29).

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I explore how eight women construct their identities through ontological and public narratives of living in Aradale and Hurstfield communities. I am particularly interested in the stories they tell about the physical places and social spaces they live in. I discuss the importance the women place on maintaining links with extended family and friends living elsewhere in addition to contact with their husband's family locally (Section 5.2) and then how getting involved in different school, church and club activities has shaped their identities (Section 5.3). Next, I explore what "community" means to these women and the sense they have of belonging to different communities (Section 5.4). How the women negotiate their status as an outsider who may in time become a local or insider is important; some say this is never achievable and they do not desire it (Section 5.5). While I have divided this chapter into sections to discuss the themes from my analysis, it is not possible in reality to confine the material to separate sections. I conclude (Section 5.6) that these themes are all linked and interrelate to form a whole. The women belong to multiple communities, which are not static, like their identities, but are more relational in nature. Some are geographically defined while others are symbolic constructions. There are generational stories that differ, while others stay more constant through time and are linked to public narratives.

Somers' theory of the narrative constitution of identity continues to frame this chapter. While the women used some abstract ideas to help organise their stories, like "community," "others," and "locals," I also use Somers' conceptual narrativity to frame this chapter:

The conceptual challenge that narrativity poses is to develop a social analytic vocabulary that can accommodate the contention that social life, social organizations, social action, and social identities are narratively, that is, temporally and relationally, constructed through both ontological and public narratives (Somers 1994:620).

The general themes I intend exploring often overlap. These include: connections between the women and their social and physical surroundings; a sense of belonging in relation to residency; and the women's economic sense in relation to paid employment and community commitments. Throughout this chapter there are also different stories that reflect public narratives that are accepted in Aradale and Hurstfield. These public narratives come from three sources. First is the wider rural culture that has historically existed in New Zealand (Bell 1993). Second, they come from the locally specific stories of Hurstfield and Aradale as told by the women during the research project. The third source of public narratives arose from my own personal experience growing up in those communities through the 1970s and 1980s. Some women interviewed resisted these public narratives in order to negotiate life in these rural communities, while others resisted some and accepted other public narratives. Examples of these public narratives include, joining YFC to "get a farmer" to marry, which most women resisted; that this was always a "caring community", and achieving "local" status. The women told stories both accepting and rejecting these last two public narratives. Overall the "30 something" generation resisted more public narratives than their "40 to 50 something" counterparts, but this may be a reflection of the stage of life they were at because the older generation challenged some community traditions on their arrival two or three decades earlier. Community participation through the likes of school, church, Plunket and Playcentre were public narratives that were accepted by women of both generations to differing extents.

Previous research into the meaning of community has produced no consensual definition; Hillery (1955) analysed 94 definitions of community to find the only thing they had in common was people. Rather than revisit that debate (for an overview refer to Tonnie 1963; Bell & Newby 1971; Gusfield 1975; Cohen 1985; Pearson 1994; Bell 1997; or, more specifically, Crow 1996a & 1996b) I have chosen to study community through narrativity. This is a new and different way of constructing the community debate compared to the above literature. The strategy I use explores community, through narrative identities, using a framework that Somers (1986) first used in her Ph.D. dissertation. Her overall aim was "to demonstrate the theoretical and historical significance of narrative and narrativity not only for studies of working-class formation, but for social science research more generally" (Somers 1993:592). Using this framework I investigate the identities that women have as community members, or perhaps outsiders, through the stories they tell over time and space, embedded in their respective networks and relational settings. "Relational setting" is the term that Somers used instead of society in order to capture the narrativity of social life. Relational settings are characterised through their history including exploration over time and space. Before exploring the relational settings of Aradale and Hurstfield through the conceptual narrativity of community, belonging,

local or outsider status I start with a discussion of the women's contact with their family of origin and that of their husband's family. This is followed by a discussion of the institutions and clubs the women were involved in at a community level.

5.2 Familial Connections

When I asked the women, "*What is most important in your life?*" seven responded that it was their family and/or children. The nuclear family is complemented by the extended family living further afield, most often in urban areas for the women interviewed. Historically family was important to rural women, and Bell (1993:72) states:

It is difficult to separate an ideology of "family" from an ideology of "rural." The New Zealand family embraced both ideologies both during and since colonialism, fitting the model of the "classical family of Western nostalgia."

Family farms have been the backbone of New Zealand's economy but are threatened by an increasing move towards economies of scale and greater productivity; smaller uneconomic units are being consolidated for survival (Watkin 1997). The family in this rural context where the home and workplace coincide is in direct contrast to their urban counterparts who usually had separate workplaces and home. These dynamics lead to different narrative constructions of identity depending on how insular a rural family becomes or whether they maintain contact with outside relatives and friends.

5.2.1 Extended Family and Friends

All the women said contact with their friends and family of origin who lived elsewhere was important. The "30 something" women particularly identified a strong connection with their own extended family; Sally, Margaret and Emma wanted their pre-school children to feel comfortable in the urban background of their mothers. It was important that these women saw their children coping in the urban as well as rural environment. Time in the cities served a twofold purpose: women socialised with family and friends; and they also took the opportunity for off-farm entertainment not available locally. Emma recalls her son's culture shock with the busyness of traffic in the city so she now ensures he has regular visits off the farm to her urban relatives. They live within an hour and a half's drive from Aradale, so Emma enjoys regular contact with her parents and siblings.

Sally enjoys the social and entertainment qualities that the city offered not only to her but also her children. Sally sees her extended family two or three times a month in the city and "*they*

would visit maybe once a month." With her brothers and sisters living further afield Sally usually maintains weekly telephone contact. The relational setting, in which these women live and socialise, covers a wide geographic area reflecting where family and friends live. Both Emma and Sally's narrative identities are constituted in Aradale (and also in Hurstfield for Sally) and further afield in the social spaces of the city. For Sally her home base is a farm near Hurstfield, yet her networks extend globally as she maintains contact with a sibling in the Northern Hemisphere. The relational matrix in which Sally functions has changed over time and space so she has constituted multiple identities, as have the other women interviewed.

Both Sally and Sue talked of having friends come to stay on the farm. Sally said, "*We make an effort to try and have people down to the farm for lunch or for a weekend.*" Sue loved entertaining friends in their big house, "*You can say, 'Look come and stay we have got heaps of room'...plus having Aradale close by where we can go out for dinner.*" Friends were an important part of her support network via email, telephone, cards or post. These women's urban-based support networks continued to shape their identities despite the geographic isolation they experienced in this rural community. The example of Sue communicating with her friends through a variety of mediums is what Doreen Massey describes as "time-space compression." She says "time-space compression refers to movement and communication across space, to the geographical stretching-out of social relations, and to our experience of all this" (Massey 1994:147).

Couples where one or both partners had been away to boarding school had a wider support network of friends in the city and across the country than their locally schooled peers. Sally, Sue, and their respective husbands went to private schools and they said life did not start and end at the "farm gate" for them. Historically, the social hierarchy of Canterbury was divided into two tiers; the "higher tier" consisted of landholders, who sent their children to boarding school, while the "lower tier" were the workers whose children were educated locally. After World War Two the criterion of farming ability took precedence and the "local elite" were no longer those who attended boarding school (Hatch 1992:185). Yet the narrative identities negotiated through these more extensive boarding school networks, or relational settings as Somers terms them, still demonstrate that a social hierarchy exists.

The women with relatives in the North Island still maintained strong connections with their family even if they had taken on a "mainland identity." Margaret was the only North Island born woman interviewed. While her extended family has all remained in the North Island, the smaller number of people and their friendly nature attracted her to the South Island:

Since I have had my children she [Mum] has made a real effort to come [down here] and...we have said that every second year we will go up there. So it is important for us to still have that connection but probably just financially it makes it difficult (Margaret, b 1966).

Margaret's relational network, like Sally's, encompassed multiple places where connections were made between her nuclear and extended family. When Emma and Sue reflected back on their upbringing they both acknowledged their mothers as being influential in their identity formation. Sue said, "My mother was **extremely independent**." Emma recalls, "I think it is mainly my mother and my background that has shaped my character more than living here [Aradale]." The relationships each of these "30 something" women had with their mothers influenced who they identified as today and how they narrated their lives.

Of the older generation Clair and Louise talked the most about their families. They both mentioned the importance of their sisters and keeping in regular contact. Clair appreciated that both her sisters took on most of the daily caring role for her aging parents because they lived in the same city. Clair did not let the distance between home and her parents stop the ongoing visits but she was aware that her rural lifestyle altered the family dynamics. Clair reflected that "countrywomen are more mobile" than they used to be; she visited her extended family regularly. Her husband commented that the car was always hot because she had been using it so much, but Clair said it was important to get out and have social contact with other people. She still has a large support network of friends in the city despite 24 years of rural living.

Louise was similarly mobile and said, "I don't mind the remoteness, and I don't mind driving the car anyway so that is not a problem." She did not see it as an issue to drive to visit her sister in the city, but her urban relatives disagreed. Louise said:

*My sister is quite funny because she is very much a city person and they don't come down here all that terribly much but it is a **big trip**, it's a **huge mission**. Whereas we don't think anything of it, it is just an hour away and you get in the car and go. But she **plans** several days before she comes down and wants to be left by a certain time of night so that she won't be driving in the dark, which we **don't** give a thought to! But **city people do**... (Louise, b 1941).*

Louise's narrative illustrates the different perceptions that people have about the same act of travelling. The physical distance has become a social barrier for her sister but Louise has overcome the distance by driving in order to keep ongoing contact; Louise does admit her sister is good at writing and sending thoughtful poetry through the post. These sisters tell unique ontological narratives of overcoming the challenges of living in separate places. They each have their own personal ways of achieving social interaction with one another in their respective relational settings.

5.2.2 The Husband's Extended Family

The husband's family was important to all women because they usually lived in close proximity to them, or at least their legacy, while their own family of origin was further afield. The women of all ages noted a change in status by marrying into a "local" family in terms of wider acceptance by the rural community. Sally now enjoys being part of the local community: *"It is nice being married to someone who has got a connection to the area and a connection to the land as well."* For two of the "30 something" women their father-in-laws still worked on the farm on a part-time basis, travelling out from Southview regularly, while the other two had their husband's parents living and farming as neighbours.

When women like Sally and Margaret moved into what was previously their parents-in-laws' house they tried to change the space to their own, "making their mark" on their new surroundings. Sally says:

*Probably for me, it is important for me, to still be making my own touches on this home which is Dave's **parents' home** and Dave's **grandparents' home**...so we are the third generation in this home. And so that is interesting making changes, especially with Dave's parents still being alive* (Sally, b 1963).

Sally contrasted her experiences with that of Dave's urban brother and future sister-in-law who were buying a house to meet their own needs. Sally acknowledged the toll of taking *"on others' baggage...we have to do things a lot more **slowly and quietly**"* in order to respect the previous generations. In addition, Dave's siblings still regarded the house as their "family home." Sally expressed her concept of home within the social relations of her husband's extended family. These conditions were linked in with the house being central to the family farm. She did not have the same freedom as her urban peers to alter the physical structure of the house to make it more her own "home." Dave's next of kin were still very territorial about their "family home" and birthplace; they even comment on changes to the garden like removing trees. Research has shown that the siblings of the family farm successor still considered the farm home despite having their own lives and careers elsewhere; "daughters particularly 'liked to come back' to re-establish their 'place' and re-affirm their sense of identity" (McCrostie Little and Taylor 1997:8). In addition to the social control the teachers experienced by the wider community, social control was also exerted by the extended family into which they married. The women interviewed, while initially stifled, saw such control as an opportunity to assert their own strength and identities whether it was through the garden and the house they resided in, within their husband's extended family, or at the school where they taught.

Despite there being two sides to the family tree, in many rural family circumstances the patrilineal paths were traced because children had their father's family name and lived on the family farm. When children are born, the family continues preserving traditions, their family name and their inheritance rights (Cameron 1990:33). Social relations based around patriarchal land ownership and the gendered division of labour are still pronounced in rural communities like Aradale (Whatmore 1991). For seven of the eight women interviewed, the farm they lived on had been in their husband's family for two or more generations. The succession of family farms through generations added to a sense of community through family connections (Scott *et al.* 1997:15). The generational expectations created by the husband's family created a lot of pressure for many women. Keeping outside contact with their own family of origin was crucial for these women in order to maintain a sense of autonomy. The "30 something" generation were particularly intent on maintaining an identity separate from the family into which they married.

Clair described "intermarriage" among locals in the community by using her husband's family as an example:

There really isn't a family that isn't involved with another family; they are all intertwined either through the husband of the family or the wife of a family. That is assuming that they have married local people. So really it is just totally incredible. Well look, you just look at Geoff's mother [Nancy], she married a local. She lived at [farm name], she lived up [there] and came down the road to [Geoff's father] one and a half/two k[ilometres] down the road. And then Geoff's sister, Violet, married Don Roberts and moved a further two k[ilometres] down the road... I mean it is pretty chronic to move two k[ilometres] each time. I said to Nancy one day, "Do you reckon in another ten generations we will have hit Southview?" (Clair, b 1953).

*Geoff's family, they are related to the district really...they are related to everyone, I mean it is just awful. I was just thinking of what I was going to say because you are bound to be offending someone...you fit into little **slots** because you belong to this family or that family and it all gels together (Clair, b 1953).*

The "slots" Clair talks about are characteristic of small rural communities: people are known by their family connections or which family they belong to, as she says. This creates a social hierarchy with the locals or long-term permanent residents at the top and newcomers like young women teachers at the bottom, the outsiders. Outsiders, like Clair, are viewed with suspicion because they do not have a "slot" to immediately fit into like Clair's family-in-law who have married locals and "moved down the road" over successive generations. These locals are all connected in a much smaller relational setting where people know each other, in contrast to

Clair whose relational setting is wider and inclusive of her urban friends and family. Initially, Clair did not possess the necessary knowledge of local social networks and history as her family-in-law did.

Grace appreciated her sister-in-law's help to assimilate into the clubs and community. Through them she met a wide cross-section of people who were older than Grace. Sally also spoke of her sister-in-law similarly easing her transition to life in this rural setting. Barbara's experience was a direct contrast; a lack of knowledge about her husband's family background meant it was more difficult getting to know others and to be known by the locals than for the other women described. Certain farming families became well established and held a higher status purely through land ownership. These landowners were termed by Stevan Eldred-Grigg (1980) in his book of that title *Southern Gentry: New Zealanders Who Inherited the Earth*. The status of the "Southern Gentry" was further enhanced by their participation in the rural community. Emma was aware that her husband belonged to "*quite a visual family*" with the various farming, business and community responsibilities his parents held. In contrast to Emma, the lesser opportunity to socialise was not an issue for Barbara as she was a private person. But she did miss the opportunity to meet others through well-established networks in Aradale. In terms of identities, how the husband's extended family was perceived in the wider community impacted on the women's ontological narratives. For some the transition to being an Aradale community member, or wife of a local, was made easier by family connections. Other women constructed their identities in spite of their spouse's extended family and found they became stronger in the process.

5.3 Community Participation

Aradale has more than fifty clubs, committees or organisations which people can join, while Hurstfield also has several. Many of these groups were important to the lives of the women in this community but two core institutions, school and church, were central. My experience of growing up in this community was similar to that of these women; both school and church formed the foundation of my social networks and were safe places to establish who I identified as. These experiences are not unique to Aradale and Hurstfield, as Begg (1990:70) states:

In rural areas the local school and church where most off-farm communication takes place were supported by the participants. The farm women did much voluntary work through these institutions to keep the community "alive."

All the women are involved in a host of organisations and activities beyond their households, family and farm. Even Sue, who was the youngest woman interviewed and had spent the least

time living in Hurstfield, said, *"I think communities take work and they mean responsibility...because I live here I have a lot more community commitments."* She was secretary for a sports club, a job she would never have done in the city. There was a greater opportunity for people to take up social positions in a rural district with a small population relative to a large town or city. At the 1996 Census, 14.9 per cent of New Zealand's 3,681,546 population lived in rural areas (Statistics New Zealand 1997a:22). Because these rural dwellers are by far the minority of New Zealand's population, in relation to their urban counterparts, the ontological narratives of the rural women, an even smaller group, reflect the necessity of getting involved locally in their communities.

All the "30 something" women belonged to at least one sporting club, while mothers of all ages belonged to child related organisations and playgroups (Plunket, Plunket Mothers, Playcentre and Playgroups). Most women upon arrival in the community were members of Country Girls' Club prior to 1973 or Young Farmers' Club after that. All these women accepted the public narratives, or traditions, of being involved in their rural communities.¹ What follow are the stories of how the women in Aradale and Hurstfield communities construct their identities as community members. Participation in clubs and core institutions like schools and churches was central to the creation of a "community spirit" and formed the beginnings of a "sense of belonging" as discussed in Section 5.4, but first I will explore how these women were involved locally.

5.3.1 School

The school is central to women as an employer and for establishing wider friendship networks. Most women talked of their teaching colleagues being their first friends. Emma says, *"School was the main support network and being a new teacher they gave me a buddy and that buddy was to help me get into terms with teaching."* The women she taught with are still her core friends several years later. These sentiments were echoed by most of the women interviewed who also mixed with other well-educated peers:

¹ To put the women's voluntary work into a global context, the 1995 United Nations Human Development Report, which ranked 174 countries economically and socially, stated "that if women's unpaid work were to be properly valued then they would probably emerge as the real breadwinners as in all countries women work far greater hours than men" (Kivell 1995:2). In New Zealand, 49 per cent of working-age women undertook unpaid work outside the household (compared to 42 per cent of men) and 89 per cent of working-age women, as opposed 80 per cent of men, did unpaid work within the household (Statistics New Zealand 1997b: 11 & 13). These figures and those from the nationwide Time Use Survey, the results of which were being released at the time this thesis was submitted (Statistics New Zealand 1999b), highlight the gendered nature of unpaid work in general.

I had a party here one night and there were eight couples here and every single girl in the room was a teacher of one sort or another...either primary, secondary or kindergarten (Clair, b 1953).

[My friends] are all more educated; they have all been to university or polytech. They have all had careers and some still do. The farm is not the "be all and end all" of their lives, which it may be for some other women (Emma, b 1966).

Historically, rural schools have been significant for their natural and social environment, by sharpening the sense of community as an organic whole (Somerset 1974:xiv). Schools played an important role in providing a community base for their surrounding districts with parents and other locals attending events; school equalled community (Scott *et al.* 1997:20 & 26).

Schools have often been the core of a rural community through hall use for local functions (Scott *et al.* 1997:52-3), and in Hurstfield the primary school used the community hall because there was none on the school grounds. The hall was also an important meeting place locally. Louise described the involvement with the hall that she and a male teacher had early in the 1960s while they were boarding at the Roses', which made them feel a part of the community:

*We actually did the sign for Hurstfield Hall; it has got Hurstfield Hall written on the thing, we did the templates for it. So that was fun, we really enjoyed that because it made us feel like we were always going to be part of Hurstfield because we...wrote Hurstfield Hall and so that was our **contribution** (Louise, b 1941).*

But Hurstfield Hall is used less frequently now for community functions than it once was. As in other rural areas the lesser use of local halls and clubs has attributed to community decline (Scott *et al.* 1997:208). However, the secondary school at Aradale produces a weekly newsletter for community distribution, which is part of the students' education. The school also serves the wider function of keeping people informed of local events inside and beyond the school gates; similar newsletters are produced at other rural schools (Glendinning 1982:35; Scott *et al.* 1997:21). The Aradale publication included news from all schools within the district, including a welcome to new students when Hurstfield Primary School closed.

School was also significant when the women became mothers. A mother's education has more effect on a child's performance than a father's, and this becomes more important as children grow older, according to the Competent Children Project undertaken by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research ("Mothers" 1999). As teachers the women held their children's education in high regard and actively participated to ensure that they got the best learning environment available. All the older generation women were satisfied with the primary schooling their children received locally and spoke of learning social skills and values in smaller

schools. Clair valued the education her children received at Hurstfield Primary School. She said, "*Children learn in a caring environment...it was a wondrous primary education for those children.*" Yet she was philosophical about the decision to close the school, thinking it was best for today's young children. She would not be drawn into comparing schooling at the larger Aradale Primary School where she now teaches. Small rural schools have historically been closing over the years, but in the late 1990s there is another major rationalisation taking place.²

These closures are most significant for the "30 something" mothers with pre-school children, but do have wider implications in the community. Margaret envisages her children attending Aradale Primary School since Hurstfield Primary School closed in 1998, whereas Simon prefers the nearby two teacher rural school if it remains open:

When we talked about what school the children were going to go to when we knew Hurstfield was closing down I automatically thought that we would send our children to Aradale. Because I think in terms of going back to work at Aradale [secondary school] and doing jobs in Aradale and everything whereas Simon automatically thought that they would go to [the nearest rural school]. ...Well now it turns out that by the time that Paul gets to school [the next rural school] is probably going to be closed as well (Margaret, b 1966).

The local school closure/s introduced changes to the wider network of parents spatially and socially. It changed the relational setting to include much wider boundaries for parents and students alike. The more local geographically defined communities based around schools like Hurstfield were being shattered. Margaret articulated her concerns:

...when the school closes down and I am going to send my children to Aradale...it will require more effort. Whereas I think I just expected it to happen [at Hurstfield] as I got involved in the school...[now] it is going to take more effort to get to know a few more people. ...I will still get to know parents there and I will get to know teachers there, but it will be different because they will come from a wider area (Margaret, b 1966).

Parents, like Margaret, have to explore the conflicting issues concerning the larger, higher technology schools which offer "better" opportunities for their children and the smaller "uneconomical" schools that have a social function and personalised attention that cannot necessarily be measured in monetary terms (Bray 1997). With the school being the sole institution left in Hurstfield questions arise. Will this mean the breakdown of the community, as it is known? New forms of community arose from the 1920s consolidation of rural schools in Iowa (Reynolds 1995:469), but whether the American experience can translate to the late 1990s/early twenty-first century experience of New Zealand remains to be seen. However, Somerset (1938:74) describes the consolidation of four schools into one in 1925 at *Littledene*,

² The historical closures in New Zealand, including the current changes with the Ministry of Education's Education Development Initiative (EDI), were briefly outlined in Chapter One, footnote 5.

and in his later research in the 1960s a sense of community still existed, even if in a different form (Somerset 1974). In the last decade Taranaki "local" rural residents interviewed on *National Bank Country Calendar* (1999) expressed concern over future school closures and amalgamation; they preferred to amalgamate with the neighbouring school rather than lose them both. These changes, like those experienced in Hurstfield, disrupted the women's ontological narratives of mothering primary school children. No longer could they put their children on the school bus at the gate, safe in the knowledge they were being educated a few kilometres away at the local school. The women were now faced with ensuring their children were transported to Aradale Primary School. The school closure challenged their identities at the community level because school would no longer be a place to meet neighbouring parents locally.

Three "40 to 50 something" women were dissatisfied with the education of their form one and two children, which they felt was not being taken seriously at Aradale. All the older women sent their teenagers to boarding schools, reflecting their own educational backgrounds. However, Clair's and Barbara's children boarded at state schools because they could not afford to send them to the private schools they once attended. Barbara talks about the schooling of her two eldest children, and the changes in boarding schooling over the years:

*But you must remember Fred and I both went away to boarding school. We both loved boarding school and we wanted our kids to have that opportunity because it opens some new doors, it's the **people you meet** and the **contacts you make** that makes all the difference (Barbara, b 1956).*

*...the private schools are just about twice as dear as the state run ones. The people at [Fiona's school], I can't believe how friendly they are, they are just like the ones that I went to school with. They are chatty, they are really, really friendly whereas I think [my old boarding school] has got that **snobby**. They are people that are very well off who are sending their kids to [that school]. It has changed, I never felt like that (Barbara, b 1956).*

The key components of time and space, which make up conceptual narrativity, are expressed through Barbara's narratives. Boarding school has changed through time, as has its accessibility to these rural parents. Barbara now regards the families sending their children to the private school she attended as a teenager as "**snobby**" in contrast to the state school her daughter boards at where the families are "*friendly...like the ones that I went to school with.*" Changes have also occurred through space as Barbara was schooled in a different city from the one where her daughter now boards. The relational settings for both generations were similar in that they attended boarding school when many of their peers did not, but the ontological narratives of this mother and daughter are different. These generational differences

are a result of the different temporal space of their schooling, and social and economic factors like the rural downturn.

5.3.2 Church

The church has historically been a core institution of any rural community. Most New Zealand country parishes began in the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century as communities who sought independence from larger town or city based parishes; local people fundraised and built churches to serve their people (Bennett 1998:49). Now in the late twentieth century amidst massive social and economic change in rural communities, "churches stand [as] a solitary reminder of a community's story. Stories of commitment, struggle, belief, and hope" (Warburton 1998:17). The women interviewed were involved in two of the three mainstream churches of Aradale; they constructed identities that were similar in some circumstances in that they attended church, yet their specific beliefs and practices were different and shifted over time. The majority of the women interviewed support the public narratives of church as a central institution in their community lives, with Louise and Margaret, in particular, finding the church and their faith central to their identities. Church was discussed at differing lengths by the rest of the women, while Sue resisted the narrative of aligning herself with any particular religion or church, instead focusing on her spirituality and being a Christian.

When first married, Louise belonged to a young wives' group as her first involvement outside the irregular church attendance she made. However, when the children were born the whole family attended church on a more regular basis.

Women are affirmed by mainstream New Zealand religion as equal to men in the sight of God. But in the sight of men, they are affirmed primarily for being heterosexual, married and child-producing or for being chaste celibates (Benland 1987:167).

Louise accepted the public narrative that "fine upstanding citizens" are raised through regularly attending a religious institution that instills morals and values in the younger generation. In this relational setting Louise was a "perfect wife and mother" in this rural community by first having children and then secondly, getting them baptised so they became part of the wider church community. This sense of belonging was important for Louise. She has undertaken many "*pastoral care type of things*" over the years and has joined the Pastoral Care Team in addition to rural counselling through the church. In a patriarchal religion like Christianity women have historically done the more private tasks in church, like cleaning, arranging flowers, and caring/nurturing roles, rather than be the public leaders (Benland 1987:166). Yet these public narratives are slowly changing to include women in leadership positions in churches. Louise, is

an established member of the church community who is very involved in the Parish Council (a key leadership role), and is a district coordinator responsible for organising social gatherings. At the time of the interviews Louise had also been accepted as a chaplain and was waiting to start in a Southview workplace.

It is more common for women in the 1990s to be taking on leadership roles in the church that were not acceptable to the more conservative members of society even two decades ago. Louise said, *"I was asked to join the Parish Council. I had been asked several years ago but I turned it down because...I didn't think I would come up to their expectations."* Louise, a "50 something" woman, was now more comfortable with this leadership role. Margaret is part of the new generation of leaders, aged "30 something," and she, like Louise, is also a member of the Parish Council. The temporality of these narrative identities is important because Louise would not have been able to take on this leadership role in the church 20 years ago, as Margaret has done as a relatively new member of the Aradale church community; such behaviour would have been socially unacceptable back then.

Margaret stated that the church was the first thing she joined on arriving in Aradale. Now being involved as a member of the Parish Council, she said, *"I see myself as a leader in the church."* Margaret is also a Convenor, which is another leadership role that takes up a lot of time. She misses the friendships with committed Christians her own age she had in previous urban parishes. Margaret said:

*When I think in terms of my Identity, when I think about who I am, I think a lot in terms of my Christian background. Having grown up as a Christian I think my reactions are different to other people who have, you know, grown up in a secular background. And I would like to think in terms of bringing up my children there is a certain amount of Christian principles that I feel that I can stick to. I know that it always gets on my nerves when people bring their children for baptism at church whom I have never seen before and they make vows that they are going to bring their children up in a Christian home. But I always think that, **"you can't do that if you don't come to church and find out what that means."** I would like to think that I am because my children go to church every week that they, together we are going to bring them up with Christian values and hopefully that will make them better people. I know...that will make them better people, more loving and more **accepting** people and I would like to think that is the sort of person that I am as well. Very accepting of everyone (Margaret, b 1966).*

Margaret tells this ontological narrative that makes sense of her life. Locating herself in this story, Margaret highlights the importance of her identity as a Christian. She also draws the distinction between the relational setting she grew up in, that of a Christian background, which is quite different from the "secular background" of other people. These "Christian values" from her upbringing are something Margaret wants to impart to her children.

Other women talked of the church's importance in a more social or peripheral way. Barbara thought she would attend more regularly if they had more time to do so as a family. She said, *"I have been teaching children's church on and off since the children were little but I gave up the end of last year because Fiona was at [boarding school]."* Church had a big bearing on her childhood with their Sunday attendance being the main family outing of the week. Sally and Emma thought they would get more involved in church as their children got older. However, Sally still considered she belonged to the church community. Coffee mornings organised by another church were mentioned by two of the women with young children. Emma liked the unstructured nature of these gatherings (in contrast to the crèche) where mothers meet over coffee and chat while their children play together. It was also important for Emma to support her mother-in-law, who is actively involved in the church and young mothers' group. While these ontological narratives were key to making sense of the individual social actors' lives, it was important to also look at the broader context of the narrators. Christianity has dominated New Zealand society as in other western cultures (Benland 1987:163). As such, Christianity could be termed a metanarrative because it "refers to the "master-narratives" in which we are embedded as contemporary actors in history and as social scientists" (Somers 1992:605). Even those, like Sue, who did not agree with the traditions or dominant public narratives of the church, and produced their own counter narratives, did so in relation to the metanarrative of Christianity.

Sue held very strong views about the role of the church and different denominations in the local Hurstfield and wider Aradale community. She felt that one denomination in particular dominated the wider Aradale district in terms of numbers who attended and the subsequent social and strategic allegiances that resulted. Sue preferred to focus on being spiritual and a Christian. She was not swayed into attending the church of her husband's upbringing because her strong connection was with the church that she had grown up attending. She said:

If spiritual is about a concrete institution and attending it, then no that is not important; but being a good Christian to me is. Taking on the Ten Commandments and that to me is just something that is internalised. And I always remember this person telling me that everyone is born with a small "c," it is just how big that "c" becomes, that we are all Christians when we are born and it just depends what we do with it. And it is important for me to do good things and to be a helpful person. I see these as being very important facets but I also think that is part of the humanistic nature of being a teacher as well (Sue, b 1967).

While Sue presents a quite different narrative identity from Margaret, they both come to the end of their ontological narratives by reflecting on the type of person they are, or want to be. Sue

talks of being "*good and helpful*" while Margaret speaks of being "*loving and more **accepting***." For Sue it is not important to attend the physical institution of a church in order to be Christian, which is achieved by the way a person lives their life. This view directly contrasts with Margaret who believed that attending church regularly is central to being a Christian. However, Louise takes the middle ground when she says, "*I am really keen to see the church out in the community. That is my big thing, that it is out in the community and that you are seen to be a Christian **by** the way you live your life.*" Sue also finds this a community based on high moral values which is not "all encompassing" to newcomers. After marriage, Sue received a welcome letter from her husband's church; she found this a "narrow-minded" gesture because they had been living in a de facto relationship. Sue was amused that in the "eyes of the church" as a married woman, it was now acceptable to welcome her officially. These attitudes stemmed back to two public narratives: first, the church that sees marriage and family as the core of the institution; and second, the conservatism of a rural community that likewise accepts people who are heterosexual, married and do not deviate from the "norm."

5.3.3 Sporting Clubs

Sport was a universal way of involving people in rural communities; there was only one woman who made no mention of playing any kind of sport during her interview. Among the sports played were badminton, tennis, swimming, netball, hockey, squash, and touch rugby, with several women also becoming involved at an administrative level. Sally states, "*Sport has been important both playing it and in administration, I was vice-president last year and luckily got pregnant before I had to be **president!***" She also appreciated the social aspect of belonging to a team of women her own age: "*I was **forming** my own friendships then and not being reliant on Dave.*" Sue contrasted this with swimming in the city that consisted of buying a season ticket and going several times a week followed by beers with friends afterwards: "*I **certainly** wouldn't have gone on the committee whereas here I have social responsibilities in a different way.*" The social function of sport in a rural area was even more pronounced than in an urban one. The majority of wives and girlfriends supported their male partners and socialised at the clubrooms even if they did not actively play a sport themselves (James and Saville-Smith 1989:92). Sue talked about taking a plate to one of her sporting pursuits, which was a whole day gathering rather than just playing the game. Socialising before and after the game was just as important as the actual playing of it.

Louise was involved in one sport for over 30 years, the time she has lived in Hurstfield; she stopped only playing a year ago due to a health crisis. Louise remembers lots of social

gatherings at home in her earlier days because they were a close group, who played together competitively. She is delighted that her daughter, Joanna, has continued playing the same sport in which the whole family was involved. Louise followed Joanna's progress with pride now she was playing in the city. Barbara also played two sports, including coaching one after her experiences of being coached as a child. She felt it was important to give back to the community in the area where she had expertise.

While much socialising went on in relation to being a sports team member, these social and sporting identities were often very gendered in nature. Being a woman in this rural community was alienating for some interviewed because male dominated institutions and attitudes prevailed. Outside the sporting arena males held positions of power in decision-making groups ("Rural Women" 1992), for example, as school principals, chairperson of the Community Board, bank managers, solicitors and accountants. Rural businesses were also owned or managed by males, like stock and station agents, crop agents, and farm merchandisers (Hurley 1983:19). The rural lobby group, Federated Farmers of New Zealand, is still led predominantly by males. Despite an increasing number of women members, only three of the 23 Provincial Presidents are female, and they are all in the North Island (Federated Farmers 1999). Rugby, which thrives locally, dominates over other sporting codes with its "macho male image" and a strong social connection with alcohol. For many New Zealanders, rugby had the "status of a religion" (McLauchlan 1995:507), and this was even more pronounced in rural communities. The closest women got to playing rugby in Aradale was touch rugby.

Sue was struck by the male dominance locally and shared this story of two sportsmen talking "about her" rather than "to her" because her boyfriend played a different sport:

*The groups anywhere in town are extremely isolated. I remember when I first came here and I was up at the hotel...at the bar and here was these two guys talking **about me!** Right beside me and I couldn't miss but hear what they were saying. But every faction keeps to themselves and this was the [sporting] faction and they sort of knew who I was.... Here they were standing right beside me going, "She teaches at Hurstfield." And I wanted to say, "Look you **idiots** I actually teach at [the neighbouring rural school]. **For God sakes get it right if you are going to talk about me!**" Very male dominated community, that was my impression when I first came here and the only ones you see out a lot of the time are the males; the female stays at home (Sue, b 1967).*

Sue commented that women she had previously played sport with stayed at home as full-time caregivers when they became mothers, whereas their partners seemed to continue their social and sporting lives as usual. This struck Sue as being highly sexist compared to the more equal relationships she had experienced living in urban New Zealand. This counter narrative rejects

the public narrative that assumes men are the public sporting heroes while women support their husbands by staying at home to be the primary caregiver in the private sphere (Cox and James 1987).

Sue and Margaret commented about a lack of contact between different sporting factions in the community, with the groups not mixing. Despite the isolation that existed between those sporting groups, they still served an important social function. The social identities are as important as the sporting identities in rural communities. Sport is an important off-farm activity that balances out the isolation often experienced by farming families (*National Bank Country Calendar* 1999). The public narratives that surround sport in Aradale and Hurstfield, as in other rural communities, may dominate over the more cultural, creative and intellectual pastimes but these groups do exist. But the reality for the women interviewed was that if they resist these public narratives and the respective social and sporting identities that go with them, they will have greater difficulty being accepted as community members. So the women get involved as players, administrators or supporting other family members who play sport (as is often the case for mothers), in addition to being members of other groups.

5.3.4 Other Groups, Organisations and the Impact of the Rural Downturn

Country Girls' Club (CGC) and Young Farmers' Club (YFC) were the most common meeting grounds for all new residents to Aradale, whether they were involved in farming or not. All but one woman interviewed mentioned joining one of these clubs. For Louise in the 1960s, CGC "*had a great fellowship*" when the women and babies met together while their husbands attended YFC. Barbara talked of having social functions to attend through YFC every weekend, in the mid 1970s. While Clair vividly remembered the story of joining YFC around the same time (refer to her life history, Section 2.5). Ever since that "bullied" introduction to the farming based club Clair never regretted belonging to the group; she particularly enjoyed the social opportunities that resulted. Two decades later, in the 1990s, Margaret joined YFC as a way of socialising with people her own age outside the church. Emma says:

*I joined the Young Farmers and I actually found them harder to get in tune with than anyone else...I think it is because they saw me as a **female on the prowl**.... I think being intelligent too, puts a lot of men off. I think country men are a bit quiet and they are not used to a forthright person who expects to get her own way (Emma, b 1966).*

Emma joined YFC with an attractive friend and says, "*They buzzed round like bees in a honey pot around her.*" In contrast Emma got actively involved in doing things in the organisation. She commented that some of the males still expected women to "*bow down and do as they are*

told." Some mothers of the male YFC members still behaved in this way, so it was a shock for their sons to see women who held their own in the farming arena. A local public narrative has historically existed, and stood the test of time, that women joined YFC to "get a husband." Most women shared stories along these lines, but Emma was the most overt at rejecting it. She wanted to be taken seriously for her own merits and intelligence and was determined not to let the Young Farmers label her "*a female on the prowl.*" She successfully resisted this public narrative despite marrying a farmer she had met through other networks.

One particular cultural organisation in Aradale attracted three of the women interviewed, Louise, Barbara and Emma, as new arrivals to the community. The group produced an annual stage show, in which they participated over the years. Through this organisation the commonality for these women was meeting a wider cross-section of people than they knew from teaching, sport and other networks. Louise said, "*I was in [the cultural organisation], that was a good way of getting to know people in the bigger [Aradale] area, not just the Hurstfield area.*" And Emma adds, "*I got involved in [an active cultural organisation] and they are a really interesting bunch of, network of people to be involved in. And were a lot of fun!*" So being a member of any club or organisation functions at two levels. First, the ontological narratives illustrate that club membership provides social opportunities and identities from which the women form their support networks of friends, and the cultural organisation mentioned above is a prime example. Second, by participating in clubs and organisations the women are "serving" a greater public good and contributing to building a stronger sense of community by taking responsibility.

There were other groups and organisations mentioned by individuals who emphasised their need for mental stimulation. Clair belonged to Red Cross, Save the Children Fund, her school's Old Girls' Association and other charity organisations. She recalls:

I know...why I got on those committees; it was one way of getting out and following adult conversation and not pathetic adult conversation like sitting at Playcentre and talk to those dizzy women who can't, I mean oh that drove me nuts. It drove me nuts, I hated that (Clair, b 1953).

Grace was also interested in goal oriented things like the [name of a business] association. She says her lifeline is the National Radio programme with discussions about the greenhouse effect, the Reserve Bank or "*something that has a bit more meat about it.*" Grace does not listen to the local radio station because she is not interested in "*farming talk breakfast, dinner and tea.*" Similarly she has never been involved in Women's Institute because "*whether your sponge roll is bigger than mine...are petty little trivial things.*" She is a great advocate of night

classes: *"I always say to the young ones if the opportunity is there at night school, make the effort and go and do it because you can tuck it away in your brain."*

Sally was asked to help set up a Kindergarten Trust with money that had been raised locally by parents who wanted an alternative to the Playcentre to send their children. Clair was disgusted that she lived just outside the boundary for a kindergarten in Southview and was therefore unable to get her children to attend; instead they went to Playcentre. On a broader level, town and country are now much closer through modern transportation and improved roading networks, so the choice of clubs and organisations for women to be involved in has increased dramatically. As Clair says, *"The fact that transport is so much quicker, easier, more reliable, it has brought the town to country. I mean country people are not 'country hicks' anymore, they are part of town."* Yet the reality for many of these women, as in urban areas, is that they do not have the discretionary time to spend on charity work as was historically the case. Instead women have either chosen to pursue careers or been forced back into paid employment for financial reasons.

In the early 1980s most rural women were involved in some community work or several charities relating to their children. In contrast, at a later stage in the life cycle they had more time to be involved at a multitude of levels, particularly if they were not in paid employment. In 1984 women aged between 45-59 gave most time to voluntary work, just under one third of the rest of the volunteers were aged 30-44. Bell (1985:61) states "For all age groups, about two thirds of the women were involved in church-related activities, and most of the rest worked with children and young people." The rural downturn impacted on organisations and changed the way the community was structured, with many women going back to work. Clair said:

*I just think when I went back to work full-time...I came off eight committees to do that. ...[It] was '86; many, many other women would have done it too because [farming] was so depressed at the time. It hasn't improved a great deal and it has forced a huge change on farming communities. We are very **lucky in this area, terribly lucky** to have a tourist industry alive and really **thriving** in our district (Clair, b 1953).*

Clair continued to compare the changing dynamics of the rural community now with the prevailing conditions pre 1984:

*You were able to give **hours**. In a way I don't think that it has dramatically changed the way that those organisations actually **succeed**. It is just the **way that it is done** has changed. You know in the old days where we used to bake cakes frantically for cake stalls and stupid things like that; **now you just give a donation**. You know instead of baking five cakes and putting them in [to a stall], you give them \$10 or \$20 and say here's my money, see you later. Now I don't know that that actually makes for a good community feeling because having to actually get out there and do your baking and do all your bits certainly made you*

work together. But then of course a lot of those women needed that because otherwise they sat at home and didn't see each other. Now the men had their Federated Farmers and their various business meetings to go to, there wasn't a lot for women: Country Women's Institute, it had a niche then because these girls had to get out and see each other (Clair, b 1953).

Clair said that having so many mothers in paid employment has wider implications beyond the family for the community. She compared this change to the previous generation, where her own mother gave up her profession when she married and Clair's mother-in-law, Nancy, was never in paid employment in her whole lifetime. Nancy's first independent source of income was when she received superannuation as a 60-year-old. These different narratives reflect the time in history that each woman was born. The stories available to each generation are linked with the available opportunities at the time. Clair's mother and mother-in-law were born in the 1920s and 1930s when women in urban and rural society had much narrower roles and expectations than did Clair who was born in the 1950s and exposed to the second wave of feminism at influential times in her socialisation.

Three of the four women from the older generation returned to paid employment in the mid 1980s. Grace says, *"If you had a teaching background that opened doors for you somewhere else, you could go and work in a crèche or Barnados homes or a shop because you have got those qualifications."* Clair went back to work full-time in the tourist industry and Barbara returned teaching. Louise did extra teaching and took in knitting, sewing, and paying boarders during the rural downturn. She discussed their personal, financial and farming pressures with the boys, who were in boarding school at the time. Louise says:

We used to take the boys around [the city] occasionally on the weekends. I used to say that if we have to sell the farm that might be the sort of house we would only have enough money to buy" (Louise, b 1941).

She acknowledged the pressure her children experienced, and as a result both sons (the two elder children) were not keen to run the farm; Louise never mentioned her daughter becoming a farmer as an option: "Farm succession in New Zealand is still predominantly patrilineal and controlled by a patriarchal system of succession...while patriarchy prevails primogeniture does not" (McCrostie Little and Taylor 1997:5). Patriarchal gender relations shaped Louise's narrative identity and the expectations she has for her children. The very gender specific identities she constituted for her children correspond with the local public narratives. However, these were being challenged in more recent years, and it is more likely that Louise's daughter (the youngest child) could succeed at "inheriting" the family farm if she desired in the future.

5.4 What makes a "Community"?

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter people form communities (Hillery 1955; Bell and Newby 1971:15), whether community is defined as a symbolic construction of people (Cohen 1985) or those living within certain physical boundaries. People construct community boundaries by describing the geographical and/or social reference points where they live (Pearson 1994:28). Symbolic communities can spread over a wide space but see people uniting over a common interest; for example, the teaching profession is termed a community by some. Alternately, communities defined by location alone can be as diverse as the people who reside within them. However, the term "community" usually masks that diversity by assuming unity. This is not always the case. Chantal Mouffe wrote:

Many communitarians seem to believe that we belong to only one community, defined empirically and even geographically, and that this community could be unified by a single idea of the common good. But we are in fact always multiple and contradictory subjects, inhabitants of a diversity of communities (as many, really, as the social relations in which we participate and the subject-positions they define), constructed by a variety of discourses and precariously and temporarily sutured at the intersection of those positions (Massey 1994:7-8).

To assume this view, of identity and place, challenges notions that community and locality coincide. This was a central debate in the community literature (Tonnie 1963:42, Hall *et al.* 1983, Pearson 1994:28). Rather than assuming community existed in any locality Bob Hall, David Thorns and Bill Willmott (1983:183) were instead interested in what produces community through the development of subjective consciousness or "communion." I use the term "sense of community" (discussed in Section 5.4.2) rather than "communion" as used by the sociologists Hall *et al.* (1983), dating back to Schmalenbach (1961). However, when I reflected on my work as an interviewer I "banded" around the word community making the assumption that it was the same thing as location. For example, a more accurate term to use in my questioning would have been area or district, neither of which carries the same emotional connotations as community.³ The women soon shattered my illusion by narrating experiences of belonging to communities that were not always local or defined by geographical boundaries but included symbolic groupings of people (Section 5.4.1). It is to these women's narrative identities of the "communities" that they belong to that I now turn in the discussion.

³ Pearson (1994: 29-30) says, "Community ideologies may also be foisted on people by outsiders.... Categories are essentially abstractions, and they are often imposed on people - not least by sociologists!" My use of the term community was leading the women interviewed in that respect; I was an "outside researcher" asserting my own subjectivities on the project. These were the outcome of having been an active "community member," or "insider," in Hurstfield and Aradale for 18 years. The women I interviewed soon defined what they meant by community or used other terms like district.

5.4.1 The Number of Communities with which Women Identified

Different women constructed their concept of community in varying ways. Arriving in Aradale was something that Emma remembered well; she described it as a closed community during the quiet months of the year and open to newcomers during the tourist season:

...[Aradale] can be a reasonably closed community, for some things. But it is up to you to get out, and meet all sorts of different people. ...Aradale is very centred in on itself, but I don't see that as being a bad thing, ...it is very distinct from Southview, it is distinct from any other little country town around the place. But Aradale, its personality and its distinctiveness, some groups don't like newcomers but most do. They like new people and "new blood" because it is a community that has new people coming into it [for the tourist season]. In the [opposite season], when I arrived, I think people close off and sort of take time out from having all these extras (Emma, b 1966).

Other women also experienced Aradale and Hurstfield as closed, insular or cliquey communities, but that did not always have negative connotations. Clair said, *"I had an awful lot of fun down here because it is a very closed society...everybody knows everybody."* While there were many activities to join as a newcomer, some women felt they often had to make the effort. Barbara says, *"If you are a bit shy and reluctant to make the first steps then country communities can be really lonely."* Yet, Clair described a caring community where *"people are genuinely concerned and want people to be happy and looked after."* Emma and Barbara's ontological narratives, as told above, challenge either partially or fully the public narrative of a caring rural community. But the public narrative still pervades, rural community is laden with values of familiarity, identity, friendliness, acceptance, family tradition, helpfulness, and closeness (Bell 1993:127). While Aradale and Hurstfield do possess these values, counter narratives of being an outsider, being lonely, being isolated and excluded also exist. These narratives are discussed more fully in "Newcomer and Outsider versus Local and Insider" (Section 5.5).

While nowadays the tourist industry attracts a wider cross-section of people to Aradale, Clair comments that teachers and nurses were historically the only women attracted into rural communities. She says, *"No other industries brought girls into the district. **They left** more than came in and that was certainly expected [whereas]...the boys weren't expected to leave, the boys were expected to stay here ad infinitum."* Two decades later Sue agrees: *"I can honestly say living here is very lonely as a female because people I would identify with socially and mentally have left."* She later adds, *"I was very aware of being a female, mainly because the roles are so defined."* These have become timeless narratives because they have lasted over two decades. While the social, economic and political milieu has changed between the 1970s and the 1990s, the relational setting of this rural community has remained entrenched with

traditional values; these public narratives have resulted in women constituting similar narrative identities. For female newcomers to "survive" in this male dominated rural community, which many of their peers have left, the women devised strategies to ensure a "sane" existence. Both Grace and Sue spoke of the importance of being strong and independent women getting on with rural life. Says Grace, "*I am strong and you learn you **have to be strong**.*" Her daughter-in-law, Sue, says of her rural counterparts, "*They are **very strong independent ladies** and they only have one person to rely on and that is themselves.*" This self-help mentality extends to taking up responsibility within the wider community, which Somerset (1974) identified as an important trait of rural communities.

When I asked Margaret, "*So what does community mean to you?*" she included her husband's definition. Margaret also illustrated their different community boundaries by their choice of electoral roll address:

*If you ask Simon that question he would be thinking in terms of the Hurstfield community and that would mean something quite different whereas I think of it in terms of the Aradale community.... [For Simon] the people that live in this community [Hurstfield] are the ones that he has grown up with since he was very young because they moved here when he was a baby. So I think for him it is the interaction that he has with his neighbours.... Simon, when the last electoral roll came out...it always says Hurstfield Road, Aradale on it...[and] he changes it to **Hurstfield Road, Hurstfield** and every time it comes back Hurstfield Road, Aradale. And I think he **wants to** identify with Hurstfield whereas I am quite happy to identify myself as living in Aradale even though we live out of Aradale (Margaret, b 1966).*

Simon grew up in Hurstfield, went to Hurstfield Primary School, and while he attended the secondary school in Aradale, he still socialised and played sport through clubs in Hurstfield. In contrast Margaret taught and lived in Aradale, which is still where her concept of community is based. That is where she now shops, goes to church and relief teaches. Margaret's narrative constitution of community contrasts with her husband's, despite their living in the same location. They have different temporal histories, with Simon living on the same Hurstfield farm for over 30 years, whereas Margaret grew up, trained and taught in urban areas around New Zealand before living in Aradale for three years and then shifting to the farm three and a half years ago. The spatial factor of Simon living in one place while Margaret has lived in several places over her lifetime means they each construct community in vastly differing ways. Margaret also has larger relational settings than her husband because her family still live in the North Island.

Emma also talked of Hurstfield being a community, although she was the only woman interviewed who did not live geographically close enough to be considered a Hurstfield resident. She said:

Sometimes being out here you don't feel part of the Aradale community, whereas the likes of [rural township] or Hurstfield they have quite separate get-togethers so I think their concept of community is probably a lot better than out here (Emma, b 1966).

She highlights the issue that the size of a place can enhance a sense of community particularly if people actively socialise together. This description of Aradale shows its difference from a "latent community" in which people simply live close to one another but do not participate in social interaction together. Yet, a "latent community" can become a "manifest community" when the local people collectively become conscious (Hall *et al.* 1983) and interact together socially as Emma describes in Hurstfield. Pearson (1994) states that community incorporates three central processes of boundary, interdependence and ideology. Boundaries are drawn by people locating themselves physically or socially in a place; for example, Emma lives near Aradale but does not feel part of it. She contrasts her experience with that of those living in Hurstfield where "groups of people are socially interdependent through shared obligations" (Pearson 1994:29). Emma added, "*their concept of community*" is better than in Aradale. She was aware that smaller places, like Hurstfield, were more likely to be communities because of the shared obligations between people, a point raised by Pearson.

The women gave a variety of definitions when I asked them, "*How many communities do you belong to?*" Two of the "40 to 50 something" women said:

Well basically this one here is mine...[the] greater Hurstfield/Aradale area (Louise, b 1941).

No just the one, I feel more, I feel as though I belong more in Aradale than I ever did at [rural place that grew up] but probably because I only had my primary schooling [there] and then went away (Barbara, b 1956).

Both these women identified only one community that they belonged to, the immediate geographic location where they lived. For Louise it is the "greater Hurstfield/Aradale area" where she had resided for over 30 years and for Barbara "Aradale" had been her home in excess of 20 years. It seemed that the longer the women lived in the location the more they identified with the place. Their narrative constitutions of identities were formed around the concept of belonging to one community only. However, this is not always the case for all women aged "40 to 50 something."

In contrast to Louise and Barbara, the other two women of their generation gave multiple and/or shifting definitions of "community:"

I feel like I belong to the Aradale community but I also feel like I belong to Southview too. If you are out, if people say, "Well where do you come from?"

And you say, "Aradale" and they look sort of a bit blank at Aradale and when you say, "Southview" then their eyes light up. So you have got to have your identity with the two things. [The local tourist attraction] they know that too (Grace, b 1940).

I guess two really. I have the people I deal with down here in Southview and that is quite a big community. You see I don't see it as just Aradale or Hurstfield but that is because I am not born or bred here. ...When I came into this community I have been fortunate enough to teach in so many different places that so many different places know me and I do know a lot of people in this district.... And then my other community is [the city I grew up in] with my own parents and family and the friends I have in [that city]. And odd as it may seem never the twain shall meet. I have my [city] friends and we go to [the city] to go out with them and to [the city] to be with them and they stay in [the city]. They might call in once in a blue moon when they are coming back from [the local tourist attraction] but that would be a really rare occurrence (Clair, b 1953).

Both women say they belong to two communities, which are defined by their geographic location. For Clair these include Southview and the city of her family of origin, while for Grace they are Aradale and Southview. Grace's membership to each respective community is defined in a relational way depending on what group of people she is socialising with. In the company of more local people who know Aradale, that is where she identifies as belonging, whereas in a relational setting further away from home, Grace shifts to identify with Southview because people are more likely to know where the district's major town is. She also implies an identification with the local physical feature that attracts tourists and Grace uses its name if people have not heard of Aradale or Southview. This means she has a sense of belonging to multiple communities and relational settings.

Clair belongs to the two communities of Southview and the city where her family of origin live. This starkly contrasts with the experience of Louise and Barbara's single home community. The communities that Clair identifies with are further afield than the communities her peers name, that is, she chooses Southview rather than Aradale or the more immediate Hurstfield as her most "local" ⁴ community. The relational settings that Clair lives in include geographic locations larger than either Louise or Barbara's singular communities, and even Grace's multiple communities, which are bounded in the immediate district. Clair also talks of people not mixing between her two communities. In Southview ⁵ Clair knows many people from her

⁴ I use the term local in inverted commas because all the women have different perceptions of what and who is local - for Clair it includes the entire district in which she lives, works, and socialises - that of Southview. All the other women term local to be the more immediate description of community in Hurstfield or Aradale, and locals are the people who live there. For a full discussion of these issues refer to Section 5.5 "Newcomer and Outsider versus Local and Insider."

⁵ Clair changes her language from community to district midway through this narrative which may confirm that my talk of community was a leading question and she actually preferred to talk about district.

years as a teacher, while in the city she meets up with friends and family. They remain two very separate relational settings that have not shifted closer together over time, as she says: "*And odd as it may seem never the twain shall meet.*" Clair has a deep understanding of what it means to belong to a small rural community that involves caring for others (as discussed in her life history) but that is only after years of residing there.

All four "30 something" women talked of belonging to at least two communities, including physical locations and those more symbolically constructed. Sally says:

When I was teaching In Southview there would have been two, more like three or four [communities] in that I belonged to the school community in Southview and so there was a connection there. And to the Hurstfield community, to a certain extent, through social things and the school there and the Aradale community and also [the city], having a connection in [that city] with family. But now it is more probably predominantly Aradale and to a certain extent [the city], I feel at home in [that city] and at home here in Aradale so there is that sense of belonging in both places (Sally, b 1963).

There has been a shift over time in the number of communities Sally has belonged to. These communities reflect the temporal and spatial changes that have occurred over seven years. The changes include: her arrival as a new Hurstfield teacher; her marriage to a Hurstfield farmer; her promotion in Southview; being a mother using Aradale services; and still maintaining a connection with her family of origin throughout this time. Sally identifies with multiple communities, which have shifted over the years of residing in both Aradale and Hurstfield. Like her narrative constitution of identity, the communities she associates with are complex, multiple, relational and shifting. Sally initially talks of belonging to four communities, which she defines by their location as Southview, Hurstfield, Aradale and the city of her family of origin. Yet, her connection with Southview is symbolically defined rather than including the wider district because Sally describes "*belonging to the school community*" only.

Margaret speaks of belonging to two communities, Hurstfield and Aradale. By the way she starts talking it sounds as though the number was previously different, but Margaret gives no further indication of how:

At the moment, well I feel like I do belong to the Hurstfield community and I do also feel like I belong to the Aradale community. I don't think I would go any further afield than that. I never really felt like I belonged even to the Southview community. Although even some people who...are living here but working in Southview might think of themselves as local to Southview but I don't think that I do (Margaret, b 1966).

In her rejection of belonging to the Southview community, Margaret raises the issue that people who work in the district's major town may identify with the place. This characterises Sally's

experience and supports Clair's reality of having taught in many places leading to her wider concept of community. Margaret has also been influenced by her husband's definition of community because she mentions Hurstfield here, whereas earlier in the interview she identified only with Aradale. This example shows how ontological narratives constitute identities "however ephemeral, multiple, and changing" (Somers 1992:600). Identities are not static because they reflect the differing life experiences and circumstances of people as shaped by their respective relational settings.

Emma belongs to a combination of five communities in total, the most that any of the women identified with:

Well rural community, which I think, is separate from the Aradale one. I think I still belong to Aradale, I don't feel part of Southview. When I'm in [provincial city] I still feel part of it, but not majorly part of it, because my mother and brother are still there I still feel some connection with it. [Major South Island city] I don't feel any connection with it even though I've got lots of family up there. I suppose you could be "the community of teachers" but I don't feel a major part of that anymore either, now it is probably it's probably following in being a mum, "the community of mothers" (Emma, b 1966).

Of the communities Emma identifies with, two are geographically defined, Aradale and the city where some of her extended family live, while a further two are symbolically constructed, "*the community of teachers*" and "*the community of mothers*." The "*rural community*" however, is a combination of both location and symbolic construction. It is defined relationally to anything urban, and in this case Emma considers Aradale is separate from the "*rural community*." Despite Aradale being a rural service town, it is still a town in contrast to the rural landscape that Emma lives in, consisting of wide open spaces, trees and paddocks. Public narratives, which have arisen out of rural myths, values and nostalgia (Cohen 1985; Bell 1993; Harington 1997), have also fed into the "*rural community*" that Emma speaks of. On another level, the shift from being a full-time teacher to a full-time mother and farmer who occasionally relief teaches means that Emma now identifies with "*the community of mothers*." This is how Emma perceives herself, and she comments that is how others see her publicly. To illustrate the point Emma uses the example of taking her son to the crèche; if she is dressed tidily the crèche workers ask if she has had a good day teaching, but if she is in her farm clothes she is not asked about her work as a farmer. Being a teacher and a mother is an acceptable role for a woman, but being a farmer is still too radical for the more conservative rural dwellers to comprehend.

Within any locality, many different "communities" may exist, and individuals might simultaneously be members of more than one community. In addition, communities might include people from different localities. Communities are

dynamic, often reconstructed, and can assume multiple identities (Scott *et al.* 1997:205).

Emma belongs to many communities while living in one location, and there are several relational settings, to return to Somers' framework. They include: the matrix she shares with other rural dwellers; the settings of Aradale and the provincial city; and the two communities that she moves in and out of as a teacher and mother.

Sue belongs to three communities, and using the hat metaphor, describes the relational nature of taking on different identities and roles as the context changes. One person can have a multiplicity of selves in addition to living and/or working in multiple communities:

*I belong to my work community, my school community, welcomed or not welcomed and now as Mrs Clausen [what some people in the community call her] I am **part of** the Hurstfield community. A lot of the communities it depends what hat I am wearing, so it depends where I am at the time and what I am doing. My major thing is that wherever I am at the time I will try and wear the hat that fits that community best (Sue, b 1967).*

Sue is a member of two symbolic communities: the wider teaching profession which she terms "my work community" and then more specifically "my school community," in addition to the physical place where she resides, Hurstfield. To be a member of Hurstfield community Sue highlights the importance of the naming issue; she has never called herself Mrs Clausen, although some people in the community have used that name since she married. Sue uses the title Ms in all situations; in personal and professional circles the official name she is known under is Sue Edwards Clausen.

To summarise the viewpoints of these women on community and communities, there is no absolute consensus from all their definitions. Two of the eight women talk of belonging to only one community, the place where they live, and these women are both of the "40 to 50 something" generation. The majority of women identified with two or more communities and this was usually done in a relational way. One obvious generational difference was that the "30 something" women talked of belonging to symbolically constructed communities like school/teachers, work, mothers and rural as well as geographically defined communities. Their older counterparts spoke solely of communities based on geographic boundaries. Central to this discussion of community was a "sense of belonging;" it is these issues that I will now explore.

5.4.2 A "Sense of Belonging"

The "sense of belonging" that Sally raises is something that some women talked about overtly while others simply alluded to it. After seven years in Hurstfield, first as a teacher (while living in Aradale) and then as a farming resident while teaching elsewhere, Sally describes what community means to her:

A sense of where home is or a sense of belonging; to some extent it is the physical place that you live. There is that physical element to it. But the other sense is that sense of belonging and where you feel comfortable and happy, but probably it is predominantly your home base (Sally, b 1963).

Home was also central for four other women. From the "40 to 50 something" generation Louise says her sense of belonging is based on "**my home** and I have made it my home." Clair describes driving home after being on holiday: "*I look at my mountains and I think, oh yes I am coming home.*" Barbara simply says, "*I love being at home...being together as a family.*" The "30 something" Sue summarises how she creates a sense of belonging: "*Building our home, our patch of dirt and putting **my identity** on it so that means my garden, my house, whether it is our nice mailbox out the front which people will comment about or whatever.*" These women all constitute their narrative identities of belonging to this community around their home base. Home is more than a material place because it is the site of social interaction and where social relations take place (Perkins and Thorns 1998:4). The home as a base where social relationships occur is therefore central to these women's concept of belonging.

Emma implied that a small place like Hurstfield, with organised social interaction or rather "*get-togethers*," had a better sense of belonging than the larger Aradale. These "affective or emotional bonds" (Schmalenbach 1961:332) are one important part of what constitutes a community. A sense of belonging, as mentioned by Sally and Emma above and Barbara below, arises "out of long-established and deep-seated social attachments" (Pearson 1994:30). Barbara, who did not identify with Hurstfield community herself, also says, "*A community, it brings people together, like Hurstfield, they have that dance every year.*" She later compared Aradale to Southview:

*I never feel like Southview is **my** community though. It is not a community; it is **too big** to be a community. It is a small place that makes a community where you know half the people. Well I don't probably know half the people in Aradale, that is a lie; but when you go down the street and say hello [or]...when you start to recognise a lot of the local people that is when you feel a part of it (Barbara, b 1956).*

Women of both generations referred to the size of a place contributing to a sense of belonging and making it a community. Small sized places have historically been equated with the concept

of community (Pearson 1994:26) as Barbara illustrated. People remain in communities by expressing a commitment to the culture that exists there: "The sense of belonging, of what it means to belong, is constantly evoked by whatever means come to hand" (Cohen 1982:6). Cohen uses the examples of language, shared knowledge of genealogy, joking, and solidarity among community members as contributing to this belonging.

Barbara offered clear insights about how a sense of belonging to this rural community was created. She had witnessed that farm ownership was an issue in relation to belonging in the community because it causes divisions between farm workers, managers and owners:

The fact that you own a farm because I don't think that people who work on a farm have the same feeling of belonging. You have got something concrete to say, "Yes this is where I live, we own a farm here".... And I think because you own a farm you get that certain amount of respect as well. You know people treat you differently than if you "just" worked on farms (Barbara, b 1956).

Barbara says of the two or three generation farming families that are well known locally, "*I am sure that does influence your bearing on the community.*" Land ownership and access to land divides people into categories of class in rural areas depending on their relationship to agricultural production (Hall *et al.* 1983; Pearson 1994). This positioning is important to Barbara's narrative constitution of identity, as Aradale is the fourth rural community that she has lived in. While boarding with Sir and Lady [surname] in the North Island she particularly found life based around class. However, in the New Zealand context of egalitarianism (Bell 1993:10), farm-workers can still aspire to and buy land themselves. This means they identify with community interests as a whole rather than raising their own class-consciousness to become a "class for itself" (Hall *et al.* 1983:181). In terms of narrative identity Barbara was the only woman who raised the issue of class and land ownership in conjunction with creating a sense of belonging. (For an extensive discussion of class issues in the rural context refer to Loveridge (1991) in relation to farm employees and Hatch (1992) for landholders). Other women raised issues on a more personal or ontological level.

In response to the question, "*What was most crucial in creating your own sense of belonging in this community?*" there was no clear generational consensus. Both Louise and Sally talked of the importance of making an effort and being actively involved beyond just living in the place. Sally also gave the example of joining several sporting clubs to meet people in addition to her professional role as a teacher. Louise spoke of making an effort from the very start "*to understand people where they were coming from and for them to accept me.*" Two of the "30 something" women, Margaret and Emma, saw that achieving a sense of belonging involved being confident and independent about who you were:

I think in this community, unless you are really radical people accept you the way you are and so you have got to be someone so that they can accept you. If you are busy trying to be someone else then I think that people see through that (Margaret, b 1966).

My family name; my maiden name; possibly my married name; and just being an independent person. Yeah that would be it (Emma, b 1966).

This theme of independence is something that Grace and Sue also spoke of. Emma was the only woman to already have "local" connections with Aradale; her established family name gave her an immediate sense of belonging. Other women spoke of a similar effect when changing their names after marriage as previously discussed. While the women struggled to maintain their own identities when taking their husband's name, it increased their acceptance locally which contributed to a sense of belonging to the community. But Sue says, "*I don't think you have to marry a farmer here to belong.*" She later adds that belonging is created for her by "*putting my identity on this landscape which makes it where I live.*" Sue is rejecting the need to marry a farmer in order to belong in this rural community; instead she makes a connection with their surroundings by identifying with the landscape.

The physical landscape was a central theme for the women in terms of belonging to their communities; they were very aware that farming, land and nature coexist, in contrast to the surroundings of their urban backgrounds. The influence of the open spaces, the Southern Alps (the main divide) and a sporadic scattering of neighbours who are not always within walking distance are all physical features that impact on the women's lives and identities. Yet a two way process exists because the women also express themselves through the physical landscape and the social interactions they have with others in that environment: whether on the farm, in the house, through clubs and organisations locally or further afield, school, church, or a combination of the above. The physical landscape theme weaves through most women's narrative constitutions of identity; for the purposes of this research I will not pursue this theme further (see New Zealand examples like Hay 1990, Stokes and Begg 1997). Instead I have focused on the narratives of the women constructing their identities through concepts like newcomer/local or insider/outsider. These abstract "social labels" are more central to issues of narrative identity formation in the community context than the physical environment.

Across the two generations the women felt they had to "be conservative to belong." Both Clair and Margaret spoke of the conservative nature of rural people. Despite increasing capitalisation, specialisation and mechanisation in the farming sector, for people on a family farm (Moran *et al.* 1993) change can occur only gradually. Clair says that farmers and rural

people are generally more conservative than their urban counterparts because one just cannot make dramatic changes on a farm when there are seasons, stock, and crops to consider. She says:

*You can't change **radically** and so you **don't** change radically, quickly. You know you can't decide one day I am going to be a sheep farmer and the next day decide I am going to be a cropping farmer. It doesn't happen like that. It takes a long time to evolve these things. I mean, if Geoff and I decided tonight that we wanted to be dairy farmers, well it would take us a year to set it up. So decisions and alterations can't happen **fast** (Clair, b 1953).*

This conservatism was reflected in some rural people's ideology and thinking. For change to take place in a small rural community it must be supported by a much higher proportion of the population than in higher density areas (Glendinning 1982:37). Part of belonging to such a community means accepting this reality. Cohen (1982:10) says this kind of public knowledge provides the currency for social interaction in local communities and hence is what a sense of belonging is based around. More "progressive" public narratives also exist, but I have not explored these as the women spoke about coming to terms with the more conservative attitudes in the rural community.

Margaret was comfortable being conservative and did not resist this public narrative, to use Somers' terminology, to the same extent as some of her peers. She says:

I think that rural women are a lot more conservative and I think that is what I am. ...I think when you are living in a rural community there are a lot more people who are conservative and a lot happier too, I think your lifestyle is a lot simpler (Margaret, b 1966).

Margaret's ontological narrative, or how she makes sense of and acts in her life, corresponds with the public narrative of conservative rural communities. Bell (1993:121) found that one fifth of her respondents referred to rural living as a "great way of life." This lifestyle included components of "self-sufficiency, independence, autonomy, freedom from urban routines, good scenery, healthy and enjoyable outdoor life, no pollution, privacy, no pressure, peaceful, clean, spacious, family sharing, wholesome, healthy, traditionally, and morally superior" (Bell 1993:123-4). While most women saw these components of rural life as positive, the conservatism inherent in the rural community was a "stumbling block" for others. A certain amount of social control by "locals" was exercised in order to belong. For example, Sue removed an earring to be accepted for work on arrival at her first rural school. She says, "*Wearing an earring in the top of my ear was not something that was conducive to my employment possibilities...now it still wouldn't even be acceptable.*" In order to function in these rural communities all women narrated identities that showed they had made concessions, like Sue, that would not have been necessary if they were living in an urban environment. For

the "30 something" generation there was ambivalence between maintaining their individuality versus making compromises in order to belong and be accepted.

5.5 Newcomer and Outsider versus Local and Insider

I was interested in whether the women made a transition over time to local/insider status or if they always felt like an outsider in the rural community in which they now resided. There was a marked contrast between the two generations with the "40 to 50 something" women taking on more local status than their younger counterparts who are happier to resist it. This difference was due in part to the number of years they had lived in Aradale or Hurstfield.

5.5.1 The Ambivalence of Achieving Local Status

All the women struggled with an ambivalence about whether they were perceived by others as "local" or whether they even wanted to be seen in that way. The women did not always perceive being a local as positive: Grace spoke of local people as *"very small minded and very petty,"* and Sue said, *"ignorance is regressive."* Being a member of and participating in the community did not automatically give a person the right to be called a local. Emma says, *"They accepted me more because I had a local name and a local family connection. I wasn't a real outsider."* However, most of the women felt they were perceived as *"real outsiders"* on their arrival in this rural community because they did not have existing familial connections.

Definitions on who was regarded as local varied, but most women pinpointed the same key elements. Many women defined a local as a person "born and bred" in the area who had been schooled there too. If people were schooled at both primary and secondary level they were "more local" than if they had gone away to boarding school; therefore local status was defined in a relational way. Local status also had a temporal element that meant the longer a person had lived in the community, the more likely they were to be called a local. Sally defined a local by saying, *"They say you could go to the [name of a] Pub in Aradale if your grandfather was born here...[yet] friends that I see as local have been in the area a while but they weren't **born here.**"* Only the "30 something" women spoke of the significance of the local pub. Sally, Emma and Sue all discussed the social nature of going to the pub and drinking alcohol but were aware the community was watching them. This was consistent with Rosemarie Smith and Marivee McMath's (1988) findings from a study undertaken with rural Eastern-Southland women; younger women had freer access to alcohol while most women over 40 had little contact with alcohol. However, drinking in pubs has historically been very gendered behaviour linked into

the construction of masculinity and mateship particularly in rural New Zealand (Campbell *et al.* 1999:168-72). Local women were expected to be at home looking after the children while their husbands could be out drinking at the local pub.

Grace stated that achieving local status without being born locally was like serving an apprenticeship:

*It seems like you have got to **serve** your apprenticeship and I think the apprenticeship is really with time and I think to be a local you have got to join in with things in the community too and not just be on the periphery (Grace, b 1940).*

Standing on the boundary makes people aware of their culture through their identities (Cohen 1982:3). For example, when Grace arrived in Hurstfield 30 odd years ago as an outsider, she was on the periphery or boundary of that culture, having led a totally urban existence previously. Over three decades she has become more involved, or rather "served her apprenticeship" to become local. When I mentioned the apprenticeship analogy to Clair she supported that idea wholeheartedly: "*Yes that is quite well put; **it is very like that.** Yes they sort of size you up for a while and then they decide that you are all right.*" Clair had just been called "local" several weeks before I interviewed her, and it had taken her 24 years of community involvement to get that acknowledgment. However, belonging to the local district was equally as important as her connection with her family of origin in the city.

For Louise, also of the "40 to 50 something" generation the ambivalence of achieving local status was illustrated when she attended a meeting years ago:

*Like when the school jubilee came along I went to one of the meetings there and I was **actually told** that we were a **new family!** I mean we have been here going on 48 years now and I really didn't think that that was a new family. **By then,** it was probably only 30 years but I did **wonder** at that. I felt then that I really couldn't say much because it was one of the families that has stayed in the area an **awfully long time** and they have married people within the area and so they have kept on being in the area (Louise, b 1941).*

Louise illustrates how the issue of shared knowledge of genealogy helps create a sense of belonging in a rural community (Cohen 1982:6) and even exclusion. Being from a "**new family**" with "only" 30 years living in Hurstfield, she did not have the right to voice an opinion in this local meeting. She constitutes a narrative identity of belonging to a family with "minimal" local history in relation to the more established farming families of three or four generations (Hall *et al.* 1983:176). Louise and her extended family are still regarded as relative newcomers in this respect. In the city she would have been regarded as a local resident after 30 years living in the same place. Yet "30 something" Sally says, "*I see the likes of Louise Armitage as a local,*

you know, an older teacher who has married into the area." Whether or not a person achieves local status depends on their temporal and relational positioning. While the women of the older generation who have lived in Aradale or Hurstfield for 20 to 30 odd years saw this as their home and others saw them as local, they did not always feel that way themselves.

Of the younger generation some clear definitions of a local emerged. Sally says:

*Dave's father is what 75, **born here, schooled here, worked here** and will die here. In some way I do see Graham's generation as the locals...he certainly doesn't see me as a local. I have come into the area and married his son, but I am not **a local girl**, as he would say (Sally, b 1963).*

However, Sally narrates her own identity in a shifting way by saying, "**To a certain extent anyone who lives in the area are local. ...I don't see myself as local, I mean I am local in that I live here but I wasn't born here.**" Local status is strongly connected to birth, yet it can be relational because Sally feels local compared to the tourists. But in relation to her father-in-law's generation she is still a newcomer.

Margaret also gives a relational definition of being local. Her father-in-law considers there is a minimum of ten years' residency before a person becomes a local. Margaret, who has lived here less than a decade, summarises the temporal and schooling aspects of being a local:

*I probably think of myself as a local, I feel I have been here long enough to be a local but I know that other people don't. ...People our age that have gone through school here; they are definitely locals. And then ones who have married into the community and who have got grown up children by now, if you have been here twenty or thirty years then I would imagine that you'd have **the right** to call yourself a local. If you have sent your children through the **local school** then you have **probably** gotten to know people so well that they probably struggle to remember a time when you hadn't been there. So **probably** a local is someone that you can't think of a time when they haven't been there and for me that is anyone who has been here longer than me basically (Margaret, b 1966).*

How would I define a local? I don't see Murray [my husband] as a local and he doesn't view himself as a local because he feels he is treated differently for having gone away to [boarding] school. And now having come back, he is not viewed as a local and yet he is born and bred here. A local to me doesn't have good connotations; mainly because I think there is so much more to life than having lived here all your life. If you have chosen to live here well done that is your choice (Sue, b 1967).

Sue views local status through the eyes of her husband who does not feel local because he went away to boarding school despite returning to Hurstfield after his secondary and tertiary education. He combines his farming career with paid employment in Southview, which is

something else that differentiates him from his primary school peers, who have chosen one career path or the other and do not straddle both rural and urban cultures in the same way.

5.5.2 "Tourists are the Only Outsiders"

There were mixed and conflicting responses to the question I posed, "*Who do you see as outsiders in this community?*" However, two women, Emma and Clair, agreed that if there were any outsiders they were the tourists:

*I think the only people that you would see in this community, as **outsiders** would be the tourists that are here for a very short time and then gone because they are not really part of the community are they? They are just moving through. I don't think that there is anyone else in the community that is an outsider because the people are all part of the fabric, without one the rest can't carry on (Clair, b 1953).*

Clair says that the only outsiders are the tourists who stay for two or three days, as all people are necessary for the community. Her definition of an outsider is primarily based on a temporal aspect in this relational setting because tourists stay the least amount of time. But she also highlights that people's interdependence (Pearson 1994) on one another contributes to a sense of community, "*without one the rest can't carry on.*" The tourists stay for their holiday, spend their money, and then leave without participating as core members of the community. Their value is an economic one to the Aradale tourist industry that provides a diverse range of services to attract the tourists. These tourists remain outsiders unless they stay long-term and make Aradale their home. However, similar to the teaching women, the "tourist newcomers" may still experience resistance from the "born and bred" locals who will see them as outsiders, particularly if they come from overseas with dynamic ideas to challenge the "conservative" public narratives that the rural community is based on.

While Margaret does not see "*anybody as **an outsider***" she talks about residents in the township of Hurstfield as more "*transient*" because they do not own farmland. Buying a farm "*is such a **commitment** people think they are coming to stay so people are a lot more welcoming.*" She echoes the issue of land ownership that Barbara raised in relation to a sense of belonging. However, Margaret shifts her opinion by saying she does not view the people who "*live in the village [and] go off to work*" as outsiders. She adds, "*I think they would probably think of them[selves] as outsiders.*" This is a good example of the nature of identities that people construct within social relations with other people. As Margaret talked of "others" she was sorting out her own ontological narratives and actions by comparing the lifestyles of her non-farming neighbours with her own.

Louise discussed a "new" neighbour (who had arrived several years ago) who was concerned that he would not be accepted locally because he had immigrated here. This is a good example of someone who termed himself an outsider:

*...An English fellow came onto the farm a few years ago...I went around to see him and I took him some gingerbread loaf. When I went he was just **thrilled** to see me. And he said to me, "Am I going to be accepted in this district?" And I said, "**What do you mean?**" And he said, "Well I'm English you know?" And I said, "**Yes I know! What difference does that make?**" I said, "We have got **lots of English people, lots of Irish people**, I'm sure you will be accepted." But he was quite diffident about it really and was thinking that he wouldn't be accepted because he had a different accent and he came from a different place. I don't think he has found it that way, he got involved in the church and he has been involved with various groups in Southview and he is now involved with [a service club] in Aradale. And he has made a really big effort to be part of it (Louise, b 1941).*

This narrative discusses most of the key elements to achieving local status as earlier. The farmer was aware that because he had not been "born and bred" in Aradale that might hinder his being accepted as a local resident. These concerns parallel those experienced by the rural teaching newcomers. He was new to the district and did not have the same temporal or spatial background that other residents had in which to accumulate a shared knowledge and history of the place. Yet, as Louise reflects, he has made the effort (that others also spoke of) over the years to get involved with the church and different clubs. She concludes this excerpt by making the assumption that he has been accepted; she does not say, however, whether he has achieved that "elusive local status."

5.6 Conclusion

All eight women constituted identities through the narratives they told at "home" and in the other communities they identify with. They made sense of their rural reality firstly through the ontological narratives of their personal and life experience. These narratives shifted and changed in multiple ways depending on the relational setting they were in: whether on the farm with their nuclear or extended family; participating "locally" as Hurstfield, Aradale, and/or Southview community members; or in a geographically different place interacting with friends and family of origin. These ontological and personal narratives were expressed as identities that involved the local institutions of school and church, and/or clubs of the sporting, social or goal oriented nature. While these institutions and clubs looked the same by outward appearances, the relational networks within which the women live has changed over time and across space, which accounts for differing narrative identities depending on what generation

the women belonged to. For example, the "40 to 50 something" women sent their teenagers to boarding school for a better education than they thought they would receive locally. For the "30 something" women their issues related to where they would send their children to school since the closure of Hurstfield Primary School.

Like the women's own identities, the communities they spoke of were not fixed or static either. The women belonged to multiple communities, some symbolically defined and others defined by their physical location. Linked with all these communities were the public narratives, or traditions that pervaded there. The "40 to 50 something" generation became more accepting of these cultural traditions, or public narratives, having fought constraints on their arrival in the community. Likewise, the "30 something" generation were still resisting local and wider rural public narratives as their peers did two or three decades earlier. This resistance could well reflect the place these women are at in the life cycle or may be related to their temporal positioning. The "30 something" women were ambivalent about whether they wanted to achieve local status if it meant conforming to the moral and conservative behaviour of the locals/insiders. Their sense of belonging was not reinforced through the existing social hierarchy of Aradale and Hurstfield but instead was based at a more ontological level.

The "40 to 50 something" women, in contrast, were more open to taking on local status, particularly the two who had lived in Hurstfield for over thirty years. Louise identified Hurstfield/Aradale as home, while Grace chose the wider Aradale community. Two women of this generation, Louise and Barbara, belonged to only one community, the place where they lived. The remaining six women of all ages identified with multiple communities defined in a relational way depending on the networks they socialised in across time and space. One obvious generational difference was that the "30 something" women talked of belonging to symbolically constructed communities like school/teachers, work, mothers and rural as well as geographically defined communities. Their older counterparts spoke solely of communities based on geographic boundaries. Membership to these communities were based on a "sense of belonging" characterised by having a home base, land ownership, a "local" name with family history, and/or being able to accept some of the conservative rural public narratives.

The gendered division of labour has slowly broken down over the two to three decades the "40 to 50 something" women have lived in these communities, as have inheritance rights, naming issues upon marriage and off-farm employment. These remnants of patriarchal relations featured throughout this chapter as the women narrated their identities in the Aradale and Hurstfield communities. Gendered ideas inform the way women and men relate, who takes on

the public roles of leadership, who does the unpaid work, how things are structured on family farms, and indeed the patrilineal way that the farms were handed down from father to son. Yet, the stories told have also been shaped by "feminist"⁶ political engagement over the last 30 years. The feminist social movements particularly influenced the "30 something" generation who would have been exposed to feminist ideas during their schooling, university years, and teacher training. Their lives have been shaped by the second wave of feminism with or without the women actively seeking it. The relational settings they live in, at a district level, provincially, nationally, or globally have all been shaped by gendered ideas.

⁶ I acknowledge that there is no one "feminist" or "feminism" and that in reality there are liberal, radical, Marxist/socialist feminisms (Beasley 1999:51-64) and even postfeminism (Phoca and Wright 1999). However, for this discussion I have used the one term to contrast with "patriarchal relations."

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is through narrativity that we come to know, understand, and make sense of the social world, and it is through narratives and narrativity that we constitute our social identities (Somers 1994:606).

6.1 Narrative Identities: Returning to Somers

Throughout this thesis three dimensions of Somers' narrativity have been important: ontological narratives, public narratives, and conceptual narrativity (which incorporates narrative identities and relational settings). The use of narrative identities enabled me to explore the women's stories, and theorise their experiences in Hurstfield and Aradale. Conceptual narrativity includes concepts like narrative identities and relational settings that we, as social researchers, use to explain ontological and public narratives. The ontological narratives described the women's personal stories while the public narratives captured the dominant discourses about public life, which the women chose to resist or accept. Three important themes emerged from this thesis:

- ❖ The first was the shifting and multiple nature of identities that these women described within the relational settings of the local community and the wider society rather than having one essential self.
- ❖ The second theme was the resistance and acceptance, or collusion, with public narratives as the women continually negotiated their identities in different relational settings.
- ❖ The third theme was the temporal context of these stories; different stories were available to each generation depending on what historical social relations they were embedded in. Some stories changed over time while others had continuity beyond their social milieu.

All the women interviewed narrated identities as teachers and farmer's wives; seven of the eight identified as mothers while only two women considered they were farmers. Being a community member was a fifth identity, with women shifting in and out of different clubs and organisations in the local community over their life cycles. These five identities, while analysed separately, were not narrated that way in the women's stories. I made these neat distinctions for analytical purposes. These rural women, who taught or teach, have multiple and shifting identities. For example, at school they are the teachers, and their identities as mothers and community members are useful when interacting with parents; they can shift between these identities (and others) within a day or even in a conversation. These

identities shifted over time, space and in relation to the context they were in. Identities were not static, but were relational. The term relational setting, as used by Somers, was useful to describe the different aspects of community and society in which these women were embedded. Relational settings incorporate the matrices and complex webs of social relationships in which human beings are entwined over time and space. Most women also identified as "*me*," which could be interpreted as an essential, unchanging self, although that was not the case. "*Me*" included identities that were combined and/or defined in relation to something or someone else, and they negotiated their multiple identities as outlined above. Clair's narrative is a good example of how she explains more fully what "*me*" means:

I am me. There is nobody else like me, I guess that makes me unique...a mother, a wife and a teacher and I hope a good friend to a lot of people. Yeah that is it really (Clair, b 1953).

The women understood that "*me*" consisted of multiple selves, but they did not have a problem negotiating these identities, it was a natural occurrence for them in everyday life. Margaret illustrated her multiple and shifting identities after returning to teach. She expected her colleagues in the staff room to ask about her children because being a mother was now a more important identity to her than being a teacher, although she identified as both.

Like these multiple identities, the women narrated belonging to multiple communities that were geographically defined by both generations, while the "30 something" women also identified belonging to symbolic communities like the "*community of mothers*" and the "*community of teachers*." This younger generation also shifted between their identification as newcomers and locals; they only felt local in relation to tourists. In general these women resisted the issue that there were any outsiders and ever wanting to achieve local status, although they acknowledged their children would be local; instead they told stories of identities that were positioned in wider relational settings that encompassed family and friends in the city. These narrative identities were fluid as the women redefined their outsider position. The "40 to 50 something" women who had resided in Hurstfield for at least two or three decades were more willing to identify as locals, but as Clair said, it took 24 years before she was called a local. Grace, however, described becoming a local as "*serving an apprenticeship*." The "40 to 50 something" women had a "sense of belonging" to their local communities which closely corroborated existing public narratives, whereas the "30 something" generation told ontological narratives of having a "sense of belonging" to communities wider than the ones they resided in.

The second theme of acceptance and resistance of public narratives, and the third theme of the temporal context, link together. Both public narratives and the women's historical and temporal placement shaped the stories they told. From these stories the women's narrative identities could be interpreted. Some stories were similar for both generations while others

were different between the "40 to 50 something" and "30 something" women. Some identities remained dominant over time in that eight women from two generations told similar stories, irrespective of whether they arrived in rural Aradale or Hurstfield in the 1960s/1970s or 1990s. Examples of these narrative identities were the visible rural teacher; the "good wife" who ceased paid employment and supported her husband's farming enterprise and interests; and being a mother who contributed to the community by raising the next generation of locals. Living on the family farm was also something that women of both generations struggled with. These identities were linked with the wider public narratives that pervaded through time. For example, gendered narratives include, teaching is women's work, women are good nurturers and care for others, and women belong at home so they are available to help on the farm if required. These other public narratives are not restricted to the local community but are informed by values and beliefs that most people hold in the wider society. Despite several decades of challenges from feminist social movements, our lives are still shaped by gendered social relations to a certain extent. However, in some spheres change is occurring so that the narrative identities are unique to the generation telling them.

The stories that differed between each generation were embedded in their social, political and economic context; this milieu changed dramatically between the 1960s and the 1990s, and the stories closely followed the temporal specific public narratives. They included the narrative identities based around women of the "40 to 50 something" generation doing Country Service as part of being a young teacher. However, because the scheme ended in 1982 it was not a story available to the women of the "30 something" generation. For "30 something" Emma the transition from identifying as a farmer's wife to being a farmer in her own right was another narrative identity that has shifted from the 1960s and 1970s. If Emma had been living in that community 20 or 30 years earlier she would not have embraced the farmer identity, as public narratives and wider societal expectations for women were much narrower then than they were in the 1990s. Stories of cohabitation were another example of narratives that have changed between generations, as living with their partners was more accepted in the 1990s for two "30 something" women than it had been for Clair in the 1970s. Living together in the 1960s was not considered an option for the "50 something" women; the relational setting of this rural community was still entrenched in a particular set of values which expected people to commit to the institution of marriage.

All these women have accepted or resisted public narratives, while some women chose to negotiate a combination of both at different times. I was particularly interested in the public narratives that the women resisted. For example, the "30 something" generation resisted the public narrative of becoming "local" by refusing to narrow their rural life to within the

geographic bounds of the community where they resided. In another example, Sally and Sue kept their own family names, which resisted the public narrative of taking on their husband's name. Yet both these "30 something" women also included their own and their husband's family names on other occasions illustrating again the shifting nature of their identities. Women of both generations rejected the public narrative of getting a husband at YFC and staying at home as a farmer's wife at the expense of pursuing their careers. They shifted between rejecting and accepting that the rural community was always caring towards its members. Being a homemaker was another important theme illustrated through the women's narratives of involvement in the A & P Show. The "40 to 50 something" women took the role of entering produce and handiwork more seriously than their younger peers, who entered but had a laugh while doing so. Resistance to these public narratives was an important theme but so was the social control exercised on newcomers. Sue removing the earring at the top of her ear was a good example of social and moral pressure exerted from the rural locals. Local surveillance on the new teachers was also an issue. For example, Clair played golf with a mixture of female and male friends and was told by students that they saw her on the golf course with her "boyfriend." Emma also felt the gaze of others when she had people stay the night in the teachers' flat. While these women were continually negotiating public narratives, and in turn constituting their social identities, they were also catalysts for change within the conservative rural community they resided.

In this research, I have perpetuated some public narratives of rural life. As our society has become increasingly urbanised, rural life has become more romanticised and mythical. However, for me it has been important that these rural women's stories be told, including the stories in which the women resisted the public narratives of their time. While reflecting passionately about my rural upbringing and the opportunities I had growing up on a farm from the late 1960s to the mid 1980s, I am also aware that it was a very gendered way of life. Like the "30 something" women interviewed, I would not be able to accept the status quo for myself if I returned to live in Aradale or Hurstfield. This research has been intensely personal, as I straddled insider and outsider positions as a researcher. I resisted training as a teacher on several occasions in my life, and the stories the women told of being a role model, leading a highly visible life in a "goldfish bowl," and having minimum privacy from parents and students confirmed my resistance. This thesis has woven together the narratives of rural women who taught and teach in the community in which I resided as a child. I am passionate that the stories of rural women be told and become more visible to the wider population.

While I am aware of the gendered position I held within these rural communities as a child and a teenager, I admit to still being relatively blind to my class positioning as the daughter,

granddaughter and great-granddaughter of three generations of farmers. These farmers were all men unlike today when women are taking on farming identities, for example, Emma and Barbara in this research. On my paternal side of the family, in relation to class, the three generations before me were landowners. My ancestors were wealthy because they were rich in material assets as landowners. I learnt from this research that a more rigorous analysis of the women's and my own class identification would have strengthened my findings, yet when I began the research my primary focus was gender.

In this rural context the persistence of the gendered division of labour has been slowly breaking down over the 30 years the older women have lived in these communities, as have inheritance rights, naming issues upon marriage and off-farm employment (by choice or as a result of economic necessity). These remnants of patriarchal relations featured throughout this thesis as the women narrated their identities in the Aradale and Hurstfield communities. Gendered ideas informed the way women and men related, who took on the public roles of leadership, who did the unpaid work, how things were structured on family farms, and indeed the patrilineal way that the farms of those interviewed were handed down from father to son.

Yet, the stories in this thesis have also been shaped by feminist political engagement over the last 30 years. The feminist social movements have brought about critical discussion of who does what, particularly by the "30 something" generation of women. The structural and organisational conventions of gender thread through the narrative identities of these rural women. The younger women would have been exposed to feminist ideas in their academic training over the last decade at university, as all the "30 something" generation have tertiary degrees in addition to their teaching qualifications. These women, born in the 1960s, have, whether actively or personally, had their lives shaped particularly by the second wave of feminism. The relational settings they live in at a local (Hurstfield and Aradale), district (Southview), provincial (Canterbury), national (New Zealand) or global level have all been shaped by gendered ideas.

While Somers' theoretical framework helped structure this thesis, it did not provide all the answers to analysing the rural women's identities in Aradale and Hurstfield. This was a study focusing on women's personal identities and their reflections on community life; metanarrativity was not used in this thesis. Somers' (1986) dissertation introduced narrative identity in a historical context. Her time span included five and a half centuries, from 1300 to 1850, in the formation of English working class politics. In contrast, my thesis focused on two generations of women's life stories over six decades, from the 1940s to the late 1990s. Grace, the eldest woman interviewed, was born in 1940. However, I focused on the last

four decades of the twentieth century, from the 1960s onwards, when Grace began work in Hurstfield as a teacher, through to her peers arrival in the 1970s or 1990s. I began with a brief introduction of the women's urban childhood, with the exception of Barbara who was raised on a farm, and then focused on their lives since arriving to teach in the Aradale and Hurstfield communities. This was a time of significant change, particularly for New Zealand women. World War II was over and the post war baby boom boosted the population. The social movements of the 1970s, including the second wave of feminism and the Women's Liberation movement, had an enormous impact on gender relations in society. Equal opportunity legislation was then put in place; the welfare state had declined; and the free market economy was firmly in place by the end of the twentieth century. But the changes that took place over those 40 to 60 years do not compare with the 550 years upon which Somers' original work was based. The temporal relationships that she compared and contrasted were harder to distinguish in my research because of the smaller time scale. That was another reason why metanarrativity was not a useful concept in my analysis, as all women I interviewed lived in a capitalist relational setting: for example, they did not have to negotiate Capitalism versus Communism. Somers' work was based in an emerging capitalist society that was still in an agrarian mode of production, whereas my research was conducted in the late twentieth century in an advanced capitalist society. New Zealand agricultural production is now highly mechanised and intensive in nature.

6.2 Future Research

Many possibilities for future research arose from this fieldwork, but were not pursued to the extent that I would have liked. A few of the issues raised include:

- ❖ Stories of all migratory people arriving in rural communities, not solely focusing on teachers. What are the similarities and differences between teachers and other occupational groups and/or the general migratory population?
- ❖ Social isolation for women, or any newcomer to the established rural social hierarchy, who may not meet like-minded people if they are not in regular, ongoing or casual employment.
- ❖ The struggles encountered by newcomers to a rural area and strategies to overcome the more "narrow-minded" attitudes of the "conservative" locals they meet, in comparison to the "enlightened" locals who make their arrival more welcoming.
- ❖ How divorce is perceived in rural communities, both financially re the 1976 Matrimonial Property Act and socially when both partners remain in the same area. Most discussions of these issues took place "off the record" due to their sensitive nature, yet these are important and worthwhile research topics. In this research I interviewed only

married women, therefore the stories of divorced women still remain invisible and do not inform or are not considered as public narratives.

- ❖ To what extent do rural people choose to live in de facto relationships rather than marry? For example, are the attitudes towards cohabitation changing in rural areas? If not, why is there such resistance? What connections or implications, if any does this have for rural community life in general?

6.3 Final Reflections

I agreed to return the eight life histories to the respective women who shared their stories with me, before this thesis was submitted. Half these women also received their own excerpts and related analysis that I had used in Chapters Four and Five. This was part of the collaborative research process I had chosen; I wanted to ensure that I had done them justice in my retelling of their stories. The feedback was mixed, ranging from no changes through to usually minor alterations. In one instance, I reworked several excerpts in the life history to the woman's satisfaction, and negotiated changes in the other chapters for the excerpts around which my analysis was based. The comments that two "30 something" women and a "50 something" woman made during February 2000 supported my findings. All three women spoke of the life history I had returned to them being quite different from their lives now. They acknowledged I would get different stories if I came and interviewed them again (eighteen months had elapsed between my first contact with these women). Their acknowledgment that life had changed over that time fitted neatly with my theoretical framework and we discussed that. I will still organise a social gathering for the seven women who have shown interest in meeting the others. After discussions with each woman regarding the ethical implications of such a meeting they now understand that attending will end their confidentiality. This event is planned for the winter of 2000 during a quiet time of the farming calendar, after harvest is complete and before lambing begins. At that stage we will have had some more time to reflect on our shared journey.

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APPENDIX ONE:
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY HUMAN ETHICS COMMITTEE LETTER



University of Canterbury Private Bag 4800
Christchurch New Zealand
Telephone: 03-366 7001
Fax: 03-364 2999

22 May 1998

Ms Nicola Robertson
C/o Dr Nicola Armstrong
Department of Sociology
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Ms Robertson

The Human Ethics Committee advises that your research proposal **“Women teachers who relocate to rural communities: Issues of identity”** has been considered and approved.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Isobel Phillips'.

Isobel Phillips
Secretary

APPENDIX TWO: INFORMATION SHEET

University of Canterbury
Department of Sociology

WOMEN TEACHERS WHO RELOCATE TO RURAL COMMUNITIES: ISSUES OF 'IDENTITY'

I am inviting you to participate in the research project 'Women Teachers who Relocate to Rural Communities: Issues of 'Identity''. The aim of this project is to explore urban-rural migration, and more specifically the experiences of women school teachers who take up positions before marrying someone in that community.

You will be asked to talk about these experiences in an in-depth interview in your own home or another suitable location. The focus for this discussion will be migration to a rural area and settling into a new community, but I hope you will raise issues which are important to you in order for me to understand changes in your life from your point of view.

The interview will take approximately one and a half-hours. If there are topics not covered in this time frame, I will ask you if you want to do a follow-up interview. As a participant, you will be asked if you are willing to have the interviews taped, and only if I gain your permission will I proceed with recording them.

You can be assured of the complete confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation. At any stage you are free to withdraw from the project. You can also ask me not to include things we may discuss during the interview.

To ensure anonymity and confidentiality I will change all the names of those involved in this project and any distinguishing characteristics that are likely to make you recognisable by others. Records from the interviews will be stored separately from your name and address.

If you have any queries, please phone me at university (03) 364-2987, extension 7287, or at home (03) 377-0969. I share an office at university which has voice mail and an answer machine at home, so please leave a message if I am not there, and I will call you back as soon as possible. I can be contacted at either university or home:

Nicola Robertson
Department of Sociology
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
CHRISTCHURCH

Nicola Robertson
48 Caledonian Road
St Albans
CHRISTCHURCH 8001

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Department of Sociology and Human Ethics Committee. Dr. Nicola Armstrong and Dr. Alison Loveridge are supervising it.

APPENDIX THREE: CONSENT FORM

WOMEN TEACHERS
WHO RELOCATE TO RURAL COMMUNITIES:
ISSUES OF 'IDENTITY'

I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. On this basis I agree to participate as an informant in the project. I consent to the inclusion of material from my interview in Ms Robertson's research on the understanding that my anonymity will be preserved. I also understand that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information I have provided. At the end of the project the tapes and transcriptions from the recorded interview/s will be returned to me.

Signed.....

Date

In my opinion consent was given freely and with understanding.

Signed.....
(Nicola Robertson - Researcher)

Date

APPENDIX FOUR: INTERVIEW GUIDE

WOMEN TEACHERS WHO RELOCATE TO RURAL COMMUNITITES: ISSUES OF 'IDENTITY'

- 1 Tell me something about your background
- 2 Tell me about your arrival in this community
- 3 Tell me what life is like for you in this community
- 4 Tell me about the reception you received by 'locals' in the rural community and what support networks made your transition easier
- 5 Tell me about your marriage to someone in this community
- 6 Tell me about being a mother in this community
- 7 Tell me about your employment and/or any community involvement
- 8 Do you know of other women trained as teachers and living locally?
- 9 What's most important in your life?
- 10 In conclusion, how have you created your own 'sense of belonging' in this community? Is there anything else?
- 11 Demographics
 - Age range
 - Number of years in community
 - Number of years married
 - Number in household
 - Number of children/grandchildren
 - Ethnic group
 - Income
 - Farm ownership status
 - Highest educational qualification
 - Highest educational qualification of husband

APPENDIX FIVE: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

WOMEN TEACHERS WHO RELOCATE TO RURAL COMMUNITITES:

ISSUES OF 'IDENTITY'

1 Tell me something about your background

- Did you come from an urban or rural area?
- *Did you have any contact with farming &/or rural areas while growing up?*
- What were you doing prior to teacher training?
- Where did you train and when? Did you do country service?

2 Tell me about your arrival in this community

- What was the attraction to the job and/or rural community?
- Reasons for taking up the position in a rural school, e.g. rural, outdoor recreation pursuits, proximity to family, other?
- Length of time at the rural school in this community
- Characteristics of school, e.g. number of teachers & pupils at school
- Relationship betw. teachers & parents, teachers & other staff
- Why did you decide to stay here?
- Has your 'place' in the community changed over time?

3 Tell me what life is like for you in this community

- How do you define a 'local'? Do you feel like a 'local'?
- What does community mean to you?
- How many communities do you feel you belong to?
- What rural/urban connections are important to you?
- Who in this community are the 'outsiders'?
- How long do you have to live here to be considered an 'insider' or 'local'?
- What uniquely characterises you in this community?
- How has your identity been formed? i.e. important aspects/influences
- Is a connection to land or nature important to you here?

4 Tell me about the reception you received by 'locals' in the rural community and what support networks made your transition easier

- Did you get a different reception from different people? Was social isolation experienced?
- Was it easier to build friendships with 'newcomers' or 'locals'?
- Were there any expectations that you carry out any particular role?
- As a new member to the community where did you get most support from? e.g. formal organisations or informal groups of people?
- How much contact do you have with your extended family? ('Outside' friends?)
- Where do they live? Any relatives live in rural areas?

5 Tell me about your marriage to someone in this community

- Did marrying a 'local' farmer change your position within the community?
- Did you maintain your own identity as 'teacher' (or now as partner, wife, other...?)
- Are you still seen as 'teacher'? *If so, by whom?*
- **Are there any traits that you share with rural women that are unique/distinctive? (that is, in direct contrast to urban women)**

6 Tell me about being a mother in this community

- Did having children increase your acceptance as a 'local'?
- **How do you define yourself?**
- How has being a mother in this community shaped your identity?

7 Tell me about your employment and/or community involvements

- Are you still in any form of paid employment?
- Were you in paid employment three years ago? *Is it the same as now?*
- *If you identify as a farmer, do you also work off farm?*
- Are you involved in any voluntary organisations?
- **How does the community shape your identity?**
- **Has that changed at all since you've been here?**

8 Do you know of other women trained as teachers and living locally?

- What are their names?
- Why do you think so many women teachers marry farmers?

9 What's the most important in your life? How important are these?¹

- Family
- Close relationships
- Links with the wider community
- Support networks
- Health
- Spiritual
- Home
- Interests
- Finances

10 In conclusion, what do you think is most crucial in creating your own 'sense of belonging' in this community? Is there anything else?

11 Demographics

- Age range
- Number of years in community
- Number of years married
- Number of children/grandchildren
- Ethnic group
- Income
- Farm ownership status
- Highest educational qualification

¹ Question and prompts came from Leibrich (1993:267).

APPENDIX SIX: INTERVIEW GUIDE 2

ISSUES OF 'IDENTITY':
WOMEN TEACHERS WHO RELOCATE TO A RURAL
COMMUNITY

12 - 13 January 1999

1. How do you describe the type of farming done here?
2. How do you view farming and or farmers?
 - In terms of status (compared to where you came from) e.g. upward mobility, stayed the same, downward mobility
3. Where do you have your own space?
4. How would you describe your daily routine (e.g. eating meals together)?
5. How does that vary with seasonal changes or annual cycles?
 - What tensions arise from this farming calendar?
6. Where did you go to school?
 - Local state, private boarding/day-girl or public boarding school?
7. Did your husband go to the local state school or go away to a private boarding or public boarding school?
 - Where did or do your children attend?
8. Specific questions for each woman...